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FOR INDIA AND ISLAM

BY

REZAUL KARIM, M.A., B.L.

Author of "Farasi Biplab", "Naya Bharater Bhatti" etc.

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TO THE SACRED MEMORY
OF
LATE
ABBA'S TYYABJI
AND
DR. MUKHTAR AHMAD ANSARI
THE TWO GREAT PATRIOTS AND GREATER MUSLIMS
WHO
IN PURSUANCE OF THE NOBLE IDEAL OF OUR BLESSED
PROPHET (*"HUBBAL WATAN MINAL IMAN"*)—COURTED
IMPRISONMENT WITH SMILING FACE, SUFFERED ENDLESS
PERSECUTION WITH CHEERFUL SPIRIT AND SACRIFICED
THEIR ALL WITH LOVING HEART—FOR THE SAKE OF
INDIA & ISLAM.

REZAUL KARIM.

PREFACE

I do not know whether these essays which appeared in the different papers of Calcutta to meet the requirements of the hour, will be of any benefit to the cause of India and Islam under altered conditions. But as the conditions at present are not altered, the main themes of these essays may be helpful to those for whom they were written. A great storm is passing over us—causing leath and destruction everywhere. Taking undue dvantage of our helpless conditions, the opportunists, he reactionaries and the communalists are doing immense harm to the cause of freedom and Islam in India. Impelled by a sincere desire to combat against the enemies of India and Islam I wrote the following essays and gave a timely warnings to the followers of Islam and lovers of freedom so that they might not be misled by the insidious propaganda of the reactionaries and communalists. It is regrettable that many of the worthies of the country are still under the spell of the false leaders and hence the necessity of constantly dinning into their ears the note of warning that has been sounded in these essays is not out of date. Those of our opportunist Muslim friends who still hope that by keeping the entire community from the touch and co-operation of the Hindus through separate electorate, separate educational institution and system, will be able to deliver the goods to the Muslims—are really living in the fool's paradise. By these methods they will never be able to promote the

cause of the Muslim masses. The history of the world has conclusively shown that the policy of segregation instead of uplifting a nation or a community has degenerated it, intellectually, economically, politically and socially. How can such a policy thrive in a country like India where different communities living side by side from generation to generation, are linked together by one common bond of brotherhood and friendship with having their interest wholly identical?

I believe that the special privileges and safeguards are not more than palliatives that give temporary relief to the patient. They cannot be of permanent benefit to the Muslims. Habituated to depend on a third party for more than 50 years, the Muslims of these days have lost all faith in themselves and have become apathetic towards the movement that has been started to emancipate India—our motherland, from all sorts of bondage. I cannot recollect without shudder the terrible disaster that the opium of safeguard and reservation has brought upon us. These safeguards are not grace, not a favour—they are an opium which with its soporific effect has been benumbing us into death. As a community the Muslims have no definite end in view and it is only indecision and hesitation created by the method adopted by our leaders, that have rendered the Muslims to the present deplorable conditions. Thus when I find that politically the Muslims have become almost dead, I cannot remain silent over their impending ruin. A warning is necessary and these essays are nothing but a warning to the Muslims to abandon the beaten track and adopt a vigorous and manly course.

Communalism is bad, but reactionaries are worse. I can tolerate an anti-Hindu Muslim and an anti-Muslim Hindu, but I cannot tolerate a reactionary pro-Imperialist who is the real enemy of the country. The anti-Hindu mentality of most of our leaders is merely an eyewash. Such leaders are at the bottom reactionaries and pro-imperialists. This is the reason why I have criticised them vehemently in these essays. If the Hindus are communalists and reactionaries that is no reason that the Muslims should be such.

These essays would never have seen the light of the day but for the encouragement and patronage of Sir Profulla Chandra Ray whom I regard as one of the greatest sons of new India. I do not know in what way I should express my gratitude towards him.

I will consider my labours amply repaid, and the publication justified, if this collection of essays is successful in its object—by giving light, guidance and inspiration to the sons of India and followers of Islam.

REZAUL KARIM

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“OUR HINDUSTAN”

Our Hindustan is fairer than the whole world,
We are its nightingales, it is our rose-garden,
Our heart remains at home when we are in exile,
Reckon us to be in that place where our heart is.
The loftiest among the mountains—neighbour of the
heavens—

That (peak) is our sentinel—that (peak) is our protector,
Thousands of streams gambol in its lap.

They give life to vegetation of which the world is envious.

O! Ganges, dost thou remember that day,

When our caravan settled along thy bank?

Religion does not teach us to harbour enmity for one another.

We are all HINDIS—our land being Hindustan.

Greece, Egypt and Rome have all been wiped off the
state of existence.

But our name and mark continue to this day.

It is for some divine purpose that we have continued
to exist.

For centuries the cycle of time has been inimical
towards us.

Says IQBAL, no one in the world is our ally

Who can fathom the pain in our hearts?

Translated by St. Nihal Singh.

INDIAN FIRST AND INDIAN ALWAYS

“Patriotism is an article of faith with Muslims”

—Hazrat Mohammad.

One of the fundamental creeds of a consistent nationalist of India is that he is an Indian first, Indian second and always an Indian. A faithful and patriotic citizen owning India as his motherland, cannot and should not owe allegiance to any other country but to India. And as long as his motherland will require his services he shall not direct his energies to any other cause but the welfare, upliftment, progress and emancipation of his dear beloved country.

Everywhere throughout the wide world, a worthy citizen loves his motherland with as much respect and veneration as he loves his own mother,—nay, even more, he loves his own mother, hearth and home for the sake of his country. Such cases of absolute surrender of one's own self at the altar of his motherland are not rare in the world. As patriotism is the keynote of a sincere nationalist, he forgets himself in the service of his country—the thoughts of his country then become the absorbing passion of his mind. Therefore, it is not too great for an Indian nationalist to declare himself to be an Indian first and an Indian always.

But to many people in India such an ideal seems to be inadequate and blasphemous. An internationalist will spurn at it as it seems to him to be too narrow to

be accepted by a person imbued with humanitarian spirit. A Muslim will hate it as it cuts at the very root of his extra-territorial patriotism. But in spite of all these hostile attitudes towards this ideal, an honest nationalist always persists in it and boldly proclaims it to the world.

Country First

To an internationalist my reply is that it is too early for an Indian to think of the world at large when at our very feet our own countrymen are pining in poverty, ignorance and many other evils which are the accompanying elements of slavery. Let India solve her own problems, let her attain that status upon which other nations of the world are proudly standing, and then she will talk of those great things.

To those who have become enamoured of the ideal of extra-territorial patriotism, my reply is that it is too late to hug closely to one's bosom those mediæval ideas and outlooks which have gone out of way and out of date with the conditions of modern age. In these days when every nationalist in the world is wholly absorbed with the manifold problems of his own country, such an ideal of extra-territorial patriotism is an anachronism and an impossibility, nay positively harmful to the welfare of mankind at large. This ideal does not even subserve the interests of those who like it the most. Many other countries which formerly held such view, have consistently with the principles of nationalism, abandoned it finally and have adopted a strong nationalistic ideal.

How can a faithful citizen owning a particular country as his motherland, a country in whose soil he is

rooted, with whose weal and woe he is eternally mixed up, owe allegiance to two or more different countries whose interests may be directly opposed to those of his own country? It is absurd to think of such two-fold allegiance to different countries. It has been found that in most cases such half-hearted attitude, such divided duty produced disastrous effects upon those who had held such views and had acted upon them. Doubting Thomases as these people are, they can neither remain faithful to their own country in times of need, nor serve any good to that foreign country for whose love they do not fail to neglect their duties to their own country. Thus these people are looked upon in their own country as faithless traitors and in the foreign countries in spite of all their services to them, they are always looked upon as foreigners. They can neither whole-heartedly join issue with the people of their own land for any common cause, nor are taken into confidence by the foreign country. They furnish the melancholy instance of those wandering and homeless Jews who have no fixed habitation in the world and wherever they go, they are always looked upon with suspicion and hatred.

Extra-Territorial Patriotism

It is extremely painful to note that while the other people of the world, specially the Muslim world, have long discarded this ideal of extra-territorial patriotism, the Indian Muslims are generally still the victim of that ideal. Their allegiance being thus divided, they cannot whole-heartedly love their country, nor can they do anything for their own country. They are viewing the wonderful development of nationalistic principles like passive spec-

tators. But the greatest tragedy of the whole thing is that those people for whose love and brotherhood, they are showing extraordinary zeal and sacrifice, for whose sake they are neglecting their own duties, have stubbornly turned their face against the Indian Muslims, and have refused to do anything for them.

By abolishing the Khilafat, an institution as old as Islam itself, Turkey has not only done a yeoman's service to the cause of nationalism, but she has opened the eyes of many Muslim countries. Since that day almost all the Muslim countries throughout the world (of course excepting India) have realised the utter futility and absurdity of the ideals of militant pan-Islamism, and the unification of Church and State under one authority, and extra-territorial patriotism has become an anathema with them. They have now begun to look to the interests of their own country. Every Muslim State is now mad after the ideal of nationalism. Islamic federation, or confederation of Muslim States is now a myth, an anachronism. Before the rising tide of nationalism those old-world ideas have been swept away. As long as the various problems of one's own country are lying unsolved, and in the meanwhile foreigners are exploiting the country, it is suicidal to think of world federation on religious or communal lines. World federation may be possible on political and economic lines, but to found it on religions is highly retrograde; because religious differences count little in the face of the currents and cross-currents of political degeneration and economic depression. First of all let each country solve its own problem and then talk of world federation and such other big things.

Turkey's Example

It is highly desirable that the Muslims of India to-day should take a lesson from other progressive countries of the Islamic world, specially from newly-awakened Turkey. The Indian Muslims must remember that India is their motherland, their native country, it is their land of birth. From no country in the world will they get the same privileges and advantages, the same rights of citizenship as they will get from India—not even from those Islamic countries for whom they profess their love. Excepting some sentimental ties of fellowship in religion, under what obligations are they laid to the Muslims of the other countries that they would always look towards them instead of serving the cause of their own country? If the Indian Muslims attempt to swim in two waters they will find it difficult to keep themselves afloat.

We do not know how long the "Muslim-first walla's" slogan of pan-Islamism will govern the policy of the Indian Muslims, but it is certain that this wrong ideal will not help them one step further towards their own progress and regeneration. The time has long come when a Muslim will have to identify himself wholly with India, and the cause of India. This being so, there is no harm if he declares himself to be Indian first and always an Indian. This does not mean that an Indian Muslim by identifying himself with the cause of India, will necessarily turn hostile to Muslims of other countries. It simply means that if he be put to election between two duties—duties towards non-Muslim Indians, and non-Indian Muslims, he will have of necessity to lean towards the former and not to the latter alternative. The

interests of non-Muslim Indians should always be nearer to his heart than that of the non-Indian Muslims. Muslims and non-Muslims of India together should make up one entire and indivisible nation which owe allegiance to no country in the world but to their common motherland—India.

Some interested persons have done immense harm to the majority of Muslims by rousing their fanatical instinct. This fanaticism has on the whole kept them back from all progressive movements in the country and has made them indifferent towards their more imperative duties. Most of the leaders cannot think themselves to be Indian and so like staunch patriots they do not do their quota of service to the cause of their country. In their own land they are behaving like foreigners. But we hope that the majority of Muslims will no longer allow themselves to be bewildered by the dim vision of pan-Islamism. We must always remember that India is our motherland, if India will prosper we will prosper, if she falls we will fall too. If we fail to achieve our destined goal, no one out-side India will come forward to our aid, but will turn spitefully against us.

Bearing this in mind we will have to concentrate our whole energies to the solution of India's problems, to the attainment of political ideals without which our very existence will be at a stake. We hope that by our united action we will be able to make our country happy, prosperous and free. The ideals of the Indian National Congress are not idle dreams. During the fifty years of its eventful existence the Congress has shown to the world that its national ideals are living realities and are realisable in India. In spite of all their differences,

the so-called quarrels and dissensions, various communities in India should, to-day or to-morrow, meet together, counsel together, deliberate together and live together generation after generation as brothers of the same family. The Congress is there, like a guardian Angel, to shower benediction upon them,—like a beacon-light to lead them to the right path if they are ever enveloped by encircling gloom and will like a faithful shepherd keep them in the solid phalanx whenever they may go astray. May the ideals of Congress be crowned with success. Let all fears of the Muslims be removed for ever and let them be inspired with the ideals of nationalism and let them be worthy citizens of India, living for India and dying for India. Amen!

'I SALUTE THE NATIONAL FLAG!'

26th January

I salute the National Flag! To-day is a memorable day, a red-letter day in the history of the struggle for the emancipation of the Indian nation. This day, several years ago, in a most auspicious hour, amidst scenes of universal hopes and rejoicings, was unfurled on the top of every house in the country the tri-coloured banner of the Indian nation. This day it was manifested to its fullest extent the ideals of the Congress, "that the Indians of all shades of opinions are so many component parts of an undivided entire nation," are a living reality. This day it was proclaimed to the world from the top of every house in India that the political ideals of the people without a single exception are one and only one and that without those ideals being realised in tangible and substantial form, no Indian will be satisfied. This day the entire nation took a firm resolve that as long as it will not attain its political ideals, it will not rest content, but will go on fighting till doomsday. This day the entire nation not by a meaningless show, not by an empty jugglery of words, but by setting a practical example, by doing some tangible works and by adopting some workable method—proved to the world that it is not a dead nation—that it does what it thinks seriously—that it sticks fast to a great ideal under every adverse circumstance. As is done each year to-day will also be hoisted on the top of every house the national flag of India, to-day will be seen on every house the holy

national flag waving gallantly, magnificently and triumphantly as a symbol of national awakening. Along with myriads of people of the country, whose hearts are now beating with joy and hope, let me salute the National Flag in due respect and reverence.

Song of Freedom

Singing the song of freedom, and holding the rod in my hand, when I stand under the shade of the National Flag, I forget for the moment that I am a slave, that I live in a slave country. Like a child, reposing restfully on the lap of his mother, who cannot even dream that any danger might touch him when this self-forgetting votary of liberty touches the National Flag, he at once is transported into a region from whose shore fear and despondence are for ever banished. Up on my head, while the National Flag is waving in the air, and below on the earth is heard the roaring of the cannon-balls halooing to the reverberating sky—and musing there an hour,— I dream that India might still be free.—“For standing on the blood-stained soil of a Satyagrahi, I cannot dream myself a slave. Wave on, ye, National Flag, wave on proudly, gallantly and triumphantly and fill the heart of the weak and vacillating with hopes and inspiration that the goal is not very far—that “if winter comes, spring is not far behind.”

Honour of the Flag

Every nationality in the world has his own flag ; and he upholds its honour at the cost of his life and property,

—he places the honour of his flag above everything on the earth. To humiliate and kick down the National Flag is to humiliate and dishonour the nation itself—as the flag is the visible embodiment of honour, dignity, prestige of the nation. Hence no nation on earth can tolerate the humiliation and disfigurement of its national flag,—the whole nation fights to the last to avenge the slightest dishonour done to its flag. When a nation snatches away a piece of land from another, the first thing that it does is to hoist its National Flag on the conquered land and proclaim the glory and triumph of the nation. When an Englishman goes to a foreign country, and finds there his National Flag flying in the air, then at once he bows down his head before it in respect and veneration, in joy and pride—because to him the honour of his flag is of greater value than the choicest thing in the earth. In every country the National Flag stands as the symbol of the strength, union and solidarity of the whole nation. Bearing this in mind, let every Indian, irrespective of caste, creed and community, hoist the National Flag on the top of his house, honour it and salute it in a fitting manner.

For a slave country like India, the dignity of the National Flag, is of greater efficacy than it is for a free country. A rod and a piece of cloth hung round it and then it is hoisted in the air—if this be the description of the National Flag, “what charm can there be in it?” The doubting Thomases may ask in amazement and bewilderment. A die-hard and cold-hearted traitor may laugh down a National Flag as a frail and insignificant thing. But to a nation fighting gallantly

for the salvation of his motherland, it is a life-giving energy, a beacon-light in the thorny path of liberty. Charm and fascination, beauty and glory so reside in this tri-coloured piece of cloth suspended on a frail rod, that, at the very sight of the National Flag, our heart leaps up with joy. Indeed, there is no gorgeous decoration, no magnificent embroidery on it, but in its simplest form, is imprinted the noble achievement of the whole nation. With the National Flag is indissolubly associated the sacred memory of great many things heroically done by the worthy people of the country, compared with which an earthly thing sinks into insignificance. Ask an Englishman, what charm do you find in your national flag? He will at once reply, "Beauty! Charm! it is the essence of everything on earth, it is the magic wand of the house of liberty, it is an 'open sesame' " of an enchanted world. The glories of Crecy and Poitier, of Trafalgar and Waterloo,—all and everything, he will find embodied and reacted in the National Flag that waves before him. Though dead long ago, he will see in the National Flag, not in vision, but in vivid and visible form his Nelson and Wellington, Marlborough and Wolfe, Clive and Napier. It is these things—the proud memories of the glorious deeds of the past—with which he is indissolubly linked up—that at once arise in his mind, drive out langour and lassitude and goad him on to further action. Not an Englishman alone, every other nation of the world will find in their National Flag the glorious deeds of the past crystalised before their very eyes.

Object of Pride and Glory

If the National Flag of England be the object of pride and glory, and a permanent spring of inspiration to an Englishman,—why should it not be so in the case of India?—Why should not the Indians have their own National Flag?—which will serve to lighten up their heart with hope and inspiration? The flag that will be hoisted to-day on every house of India, will recall to our mind the memory of many past deeds and many great achievements which have brought about marvellous changes in every phase of Indian life. When I look towards the National Flag waving proudly on the air, I see in my very eyes the tragedy of Jallinwalla Bag being enacted in life-like form.—I see in it the moving figures of the brave fighters of the Non-co-operation days,—the mighty achievements of the undaunted Satyagrahis of the Civil Disobedience movement,—all doing their duties with perfect equanimity. Repression could not kill them,—Ordinances could not humble them, and mailed fist could not strike terror into their strong impregnable heart. Nothing could deter them an inch from their ideal, misguided though it appeared to the rulers of the land. Not to take any revenge, but only to strengthen our heart, to guard our mind against the attack of sorrow, dejection and despondence, it is necessary that we should occasionally recall to our memory the glorious deeds of the past—so that we may not droop down in times of need. And this is the fit occasion to remember the past. Hence in hoisting the National Flag on our houses we again and again salute it with our lifted hands.

Alive to Duties

It is for these ideals that to-day on every house in India will be hoisted the National Flag as a symbol that the nation is fully alive to its duties and responsibilities towards the country. In loving recognition of the past deeds that were done by the brave champions of India's emancipation, let the National Flag be unfurled everywhere in the country. The whole nation should be reminded again that a few years ago some few thousands Satyagrahis, unarmed and unaided and with every circumstance going against them, had achieved great deeds for the toiling millions of the country. It was under this tri-coloured National Flag, that the valiant Satyagrahis fought bravely for the achievement of their ideals, and to-day the same flag is unfurled before our eyes and hence it is in the fitness of things that this day should be celebrated for the hoisting of National Flag on every house in the country as an indication that the Indians are still in search of their ideal. Thrice blessed be the day which had witnessed the first hoisting of the National Flag—the sacred memory of this day be handed down to the future generation as the day of the awakening of India. Being hoisted on the top of my house, while the National Flag is proudly waving in the air, let me do honour it in most befitting manner, let my hats be off to it—let thousands of my Salam be upon it. "Oh thou National Flag!", Wave on, Wave on, magnificently, proudly and gallantly and pour down your life-giving power into the heart of the Indians. I once again salute the Indian National Flag!

CONGRESS IS INDIA AND INDIA IS CONGRESS

No one conversant with the present political situation in the country can deny that the Congress to-day is quite different from what it was fifty years ago. Fifty years in the history of a great nation is not a very long time, and yet within this short space of time Congress has achieved marvellous success in almost every sphere of its activities attempted by its ardent devotees. Fifty years ago when the Congress first emerged into existence, no one could then even imagine that it would shoot forth into myriads of branches embracing the whole country. By gradual process of evolution and revolution, scarcely perceptible to its followers, the Congress became the greatest institution that the country could justly be proud of. It is not a mushroom organisation, intended for the needs of the hour and then vanished and heard no more. The Congress is a highly organised body with a soul that never dies, with a palpitating life that distributes its energy through thousand channels.

Greatest Achievement

The greatest achievement of the Congress is its absolute identification with the entire interests of the whole of India in as much as we can assert without any fear of contradiction that the Congress is India and India is Congress. The Congress is not for one community, or one race or one section of the people—it is for the

whole of India—for all those people who are styled as Indian Nation. In its broad bosom it embraces all the communities living in India together with all their secular interests necessary for their existence as worthy citizens. The Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists and other religious fraternities that acknowledge India as their mother-country, are fully and adequately represented in the wide assembly of the Congress. We do not deny that there are other organisations in the country, but almost all of them are sectional and for some particular purpose pertaining to a particular people or a group of people. The various communal organisations in the country are intended exclusively for the interests of the communities concerned,—but none of them can claim to be wholly nationally intended for the country as a whole. The moderates and the Liberals have their own political organisation, but, be it said to their credit that they do never lay claim to represent the whole country. But it is the proud privilege and peculiar distinction of the Congress that it boldly claims to be the national organisation and as such it has assumed an All-India character. The Congress claims to represent the whole country, and the country speaks its voice through the Congress. The Congress stands for India's emancipation, her upliftment, well-being and prosperity and regeneration. All that is manly, noble, heroic and chivalrous for a nation struggling for the very existence, is epitomised in the eternal ideals of the Congress.

A Country of Different Races

India is a vast country inhabited by diverse races, communities and sects having their interests which are

apparently hostile and contradictory to each other. The existence of this state of affair has puzzled many foreigners who unable to find out any suitable solution have pronounced that the country is utterly incompetent to grow/into a nation. It is indeed a superhuman task to make out a common ground of agreement out of this chaos of conflicting interests and ideals. For the realisation of this difficult task the Congress from its very inception has been directing its attention with the ardour and zeal of a prophet. It has raised aloft before the people of the country a high ideal of nationalism and has been shaping and moulding the destinies of the people through various ways and means in perfect accord with its ideal of nationalism. After fifty years of its eventful career the time has come when we shall have to judge how far the National Congress has been able to mould India into a nation. And we can boldly assert that in this mission the Congress has been signally successful—through the influence of the Congress the process of nation-making is steadily going on.

The Important Thing

The one important thing of which the whole country is sorely in need of, is independence and that is the fundamental creed of the Congress. There is no other organisation in the country which can express in bold and unambiguous way the will of the nation. The whole nation speaks through the Congress that without political emancipation, nothing will satisfy the people of the country. With the approval of the nation, the Congress has been devising means and ways for the fulfilment of

its ideals—Communal harmony—that is the gossip of the day, and the Congress is not less ardent, less anxious for establishing inter-communal unity in the country. While rejecting all the vicious principles underlying the cult of communalism, the Congress has been attempting by the judicious principles of "give and take," to bring about a settlement of communal problem broad-based on national line. Various other social problems touching the whole nation, such as the removal of untouchability, emancipation of women, youth movement, have attracted the attention of the Congress ; and the attempt of the Congress in these directions is heriocrally successful. Thus every problem, social, economic and political—is now assuming magnificent shape under the fostering care of the Congress. In the face of these visible and tangible instances of solid work, no one can remain blind to the growing strength, capacity and influence of the Congress, specially when there is no other organisation capable of fulfilling the mission taken up by the Congress. When we consider the marvellous success that the Congress inspite of tremendous difficulties, dangers, has achieved within fifty years, we only gaze with wonder and amazement, not for the little success that it has attained, but for the fact that it could have achieved success at all—that it could have retained its existence and could have stood gallantly and triumphantly, directing and dictating a nation in bondage to a destined goal. It is a wonder of wonders that inspite of repression and ordinances, the Congress could not be killed—it is shining in splendour, glory and victory without having any of its principles modified, repealed or rejected. Rather it is gaining day by day strength and popularity, and before

long it will dispell the darkness, and the light of God will descend upon India making her happy, free and united.

Strength of the Congress

Backed by the nation the Congress, after struggling hard for its existence, is now standing erect on its pride of place, as custodian of the liberties of the nation. These fifty years, it has been protecting the nation, in all its trials and tribulations, like a guardian angel, and it will continue to do so until India is emancipated. Not oblivious of their deep debt to the Congress the entire nation, whose mouth-piece the Congress is, is saluting the Congress on the occasion of its Golden Jubilee, as protector of India's honour and self-respect and as vanguard of her rights and liberties and as pillar of her strength, unity and solidarity. May the ideals of the Congress be crowned with success, may it bring eternal peace and bliss to the country, and may the nation prosper under the fostering protection of the Congress.

TOLERATION IN ISLAM

سخن کز بهر دین گوئی چه عبرانی چه سریانی -
مکان کز بهر حق جوئی چه بلقا چه بلسا - سنایی

The above lines of Hakim Sanai, admirably sums up in a nutshell, one of the fundamental teachings of Islam. If "Islam" means peace, and peace it certainly means, the first essential requisite for it would be to devise ways and means for the establishment of goodwill, fellow-feeling and cordiality among men irrespective of his caste, creed, race and nationality. This requires a soft heart for the recognition of others' rights and privileges and a tolerant mind to appreciate the feelings, sensibilities and religious susceptibilities of others. Otherwise no one can be on good terms, far less on peaceful terms with men holding different views. The essential teachings of all religions of the world breathe this spirit of toleration. Islam is particularly tolerant towards others in this respect. Read the Holy Quran from the beginning to the end, and you will find interspersed in it here and there many precious verses which exhort the Moslems to be tolerant to the votaries of other faiths. "There is no compulsion in religion." "Call the people to the path of Allah by reason and admonition, and discuss with them the matters of religion peacefully and calmly."

Unchangeable Principle of Islam

There are many such passages in the Quran which breathe the same spirit of toleration. Toleration in Islam, in fact, is not a matter of policy ; it is its fundamental and unchangeable principle, its essence and cream. Being imbued with this spirit of toleration Hakim Sanai uttered these admirable lines : It matters little whether you call your prayer in Arabic or Hebrew, or any other language ; and the place of your worship whether be it at Balka or at Balsa, matters little to God, if you turn to Him sincerely and devotedly."

When I find a Moslim rushing furiously from his house with lathis, spears and other murderous weapons in his hands to stop a procession of a non-Moslim, which by chance passes by a mosque, I simply shed tears at this intolerable attitude of the followers of the Holy Quran which boldly lays down the principle that there should not be any compulsion in religion. In disgust and utter dismay, I ask, have these imperishable verses of the Quran been abrogated that a Moslim should openly flout them, and have their own way, instead of the directions given by the Holy Book?

In this short article, it would not be possible for me to narrate at full length the history of toleration in Islam. Suffice it to say that the injunctions of the Quran did not fall on deaf ears. The early Moslims set an example of unparalleled toleration, never heard of anywhere in Europe in those days.

The Prophet and the Non-Muslims

Even the adverse European critics of Islam were rather charmed at the attitude of the Prophet towards the

non-Moslims. His precepts and example were not flouted by the early Moslims. The early Khalifas, whenever they conquered any foreign country, renewed those Charters, granted pledges of security and extended the principles of toleration to other secular matters in the same spirit as the Prophet had done. I do not claim that there was no deviation from those ideals and many rulers of the latter days set at defiance the ideals of their perceptor. There were many cases of the destroying of Churches and temples and images, and cases of innocent blood-shed were not also rare. But they were more in the nature of exceptions than any calculated motive and design. A short perusal of the history of Islam will prove to the hilt that most of these atrocities and barbarities were not the result of religious persecution, as we find in the Reformation days of Europe,—but they were done for political purposes by the conquering hordes of the Moslim Generals and soldiers. In the whole range of Islamic history there never was established any such institution as the Court of Inquisition. After the death of the Holy Prophet, when Abu Baker became the Khalifa of the Islamic Republic, he issued a proclamation granting the lives, liberties, properties and religious toleration to the Christians, Jews and other non-Moslims.

Treat Them Like Brothers

The principle of “*ejus regio-ejus religis*” (he who rules the country, may settle its religion) was never accepted and acted upon by any Moslim ruler throughout the Muslim world. Whenever Hazrat Abu Baker sent his victorious generals to the different parts of the country he

explicitly advised them to treat the non-Moslims like brothers, not to destroy their churches, not to burn their corn field, not to molest their monasteries and he exhorted them to be always on good terms with them. Abu Bakar's successor Hazrat Omar was equally tolerant towards the non-Moslims. During his Khilafatship when Egypt was conquered, he forbade his generals to ill-treat the Christians. Hazrat Omar preserved intact all the properties of the Churches and continued the allowance granted to them by the former Government.

The same tolerant spirit pervades the whole of the Khilafat of Hazrat Ali. In his time a certain Moslim killed a non-Moslim ; he was at once arrested and capital punishment was decreed against him. But he effected his escape from the custody of the jail-keeper. Then the governor arrested the jailor and according to the law of the time ordered for the death of the jailor, but afterwards the original culprit was arrested and was given the proper penalty for his misdeed. These are not the exceptional cases; in the Courts of law the Muslims and non-Moslims were treated with perfect equality.

Equal Rights for All

Each Khalifa exhorted his successors to fulfil the pledges of security that the Prophet gave to the non-Moslims in letter and spirit. But in spite of those exhortations, if any Khalifa, in the latter days, attempted to break those pledges, the Ulemas and learned Savants of the day strongly protested against his action, and in many cases compelled him to act according to the ideals of Islam. When Khalifa Harun-Ar Rashid was once irritated by the treachery of a Christian prince, then he

was about to cancel the Charter of freedom that was granted to the Christians of his realm. He then asked Imam Abu Yusuf about it: "What rights have the Christians to have their freedom about the Churches and religious rites and ceremonies in the land of Islam?" The said Imam replied at once: "The Holy Prophet of Islam gave them the right to build their churches and he pledged for their security against the attack of the enemies. He also granted them the full liberty regarding their rites, ceremonies, customs and usages. So you are bound according to the laws of Islam to grant them equal rights with the Muslim." (Kitabul Khiraj) And thus the Khalifa could not molest the Christians.

During the Khilafat of Hadi (169 A.H.) an Abbaside ruler, Ali Ibne Suleman, was appointed the Governor of Egypt. He out of his own accord destroyed some of the Churches of the Christians. After that event Khalifa Hadi died. And when Harun-Ar Rashid became Khalifa, he deposed Ali Ibne Soleman, and gave preptory order that the mutilated churches should be rebuilt at the cost of the State. Taking opportunity of the clemency of the Khalifa the Christians not only rebuilt those mutilated churches, but other unrepaired churches as well. (Aliju Mazzahira, Makrezi). Many Khalifas (e.g. Khalifa Abdul Aziz, Mansur) built new churches for the Christians, and synagogues for the Jews ; they gave grants of lands for the upkeep of the churches and allowances to the priests (Kitabul Khiraj).

Land Laws: No Distinction

As regards land laws, and their applicability, there was no distinction between the Moslims and non-

Moslims. In the conquered, territories no Moslim was allowed to take possession of the land from the non-Moslims and no one could deprive them of their land. If for any state purpose, it became necessary to acquire any plot of land, due compensation was given to the possessor. In the early stages of Islamic Commonwealth, it was forbidden to the Moslims to buy any land from the non-Moslims of the conquered countries. The underlying idea of such prohibition was that the Moslims as a race of conquerors might then exercise undue influence over the people, might oppress them, coerce them and thus might buy the land from them at a lower price. According to "Kitabul Khiraj" no governor had the right to touch land of the "Zimmis." Imam Laith Ibn Saad bought a plot of land from some non-Moslims of Egypt. The Ulemas resented and protested against this with the result that the same Imam was ordered to return the land to the owners. When Mu'awiyah was Khalifa, Okaba was the Governor of Egypt. He took permission from the Khalifa to build a house there. He then chose a plot of land on a marshy place. One of his servants asked him of all the places in the country why did he select that marshy land. He replied: I have no right to take other's land, so I have selected this land of no-body.

We shall not multiply instances upon instance. The instances already cited will show how tolerant the Moslims were towards their non-Moslim subjects. In India, with the exception of a few kings and rulers there were many kings and rulers whose attitude towards the Hindus was as humane as possible. Even the much maligned Aurangzeb, who is proverbial for his bigotry and

fanaticism granted many rent-free land to the Hindus for the upkeep of their temples and other religious places.

Islam—A Religion of Peace

It was noted above that there were many cases of intolerance among many Moslim Kings, rulers and governors. It would be foolishness on our part to deny the occurrence of those oppressions. But what we do assert is this that Islam as the religion of peace has formulated certain principles of tolerance which not until the modern times no nation of the world could ever conceive. Those who oppressed others, went against the ideals of Islam for which Islam is not responsible.

My object in writing this article is not to eulogize Islam in the spirit of a missionary propagandist of religion. It is with a view to remove certain misconception about Islam from the minds of the non-Moslims, who not having the opportunity to know Islam directly, hastily arrive at a conclusion at seeing the present attitude of the Moslims of India towards the non-Moslims—that I have been actuated to show to them the true Islam, as it is, and its ideals and principles of toleration and how they were realised into action by the early votaries of Islam. My second object is to remind the Indian Moslims of those pledges and charters of securities which our beloved Prophet granted to the non-Moslims, not of his age alone, but to those of the future generation too, and thus to advise the Muslims to follow the ideals of our preceptor in letter and spirit.

If, according to our claim, Islam is perfect, its ideals of toleration are perfect too and are not liable to modification. Let these ideals be our guide, so that we

may perfectly justify the proud titles of "Moslims" i.e., those persons who are on peaceful terms with God and humanity. If the Quranic conception of religion and piety is "not to turn one's face to the East or the West, but to love God, to be kind to the poor, to take tender care of the orphans, to show light to the wayfarer—" why should a non-Moslim receive injuries from a Moslim? Prophet's conception of nationhood did not exclude the non-Moslims ; but Moslims and non-Moslims should form one "community"—that was the ideal of the Holy Prophet—let that ideal be our guide and let that ideal help us in moulding one homogenous nation out of a mass of conflicting religions and creeds. When we shall do that, that day will be the triumph of Islam.

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM AND THE NON-MOSLEMS

It is indeed a grim tragedy that the followers of that Great Prophet who of all people first gave to the world the lesson of sacredness and inviolability of human conscience, should indulge in such heinous and atrocious crime as to murder people for their opinion, specially when that opinion was expressed in the exercise of that freedom of thought which the Holy Prophet of Islam willingly and out of his own accord gave to the people of the world. It may be argued and is sometimes argued by the zealots of religion that such murder was perpetuated in defence of the Holy Prophet. But the Holy Prophet of Islam knew better than those of zealots and murderers and their advocates, what would magnify him and humiliate him, what might annihilate Islam and what might perpetuate Islam till eternity. He knew better than these misguided zealots that freedom of thought granted to non-Moslems, even if that freedom was exercised to attack Islam, would and could not under any circumstance destroy Islam, rather it would be a guarantee of safeguard to the religion of peace. He knew that placed by the side of the Light of Islam the gloom of world would vanish for ever.

Actuated by these noble ideas, he concluded the famous treaty of 'HUDAIBIA' with the infidels of Mecca who were the inveterate enemies of Islam. In that famous treaty the Holy Prophet granted the largest amount of freedom to the people of Mecca—including

the right to convert the Muslims to the religion of Quresh. Many Muslims at that time began to look upon that treaty as humiliating to the Muslims. But the Holy Quran proclaimed this event as a clear victory for the Muslims ("Fathun Mobin"). Ransack the pages of the history of the Holy Prophet and you will never find a single instance of intolerance to the non-Muslims ; his behaviour to them was singularly marked by broad humanity and even-handed justice and nobleness of the highest magnitude.

Numerous instances of his toleration to the non-Moslems specially to the Jews, Christian, and infidels are recorded in many authentic Traditions and books in the clearest language possible.—And this he showed not out of policy and expediency but as an eternal principle of Islam—not at the time when he was engaged in a death-grapple with the enemies of Islam—but when he was in hay-day of power, glory and victory, when the whole of Arabia was lying at his feet—it was at that time that he gave Charters of freedom to all non-Moslems and he exhorted his followers to keep them inviolate letter by letter, word by word. In these degenerate days whenever the ULEMA of Islam find the Muslims deviate from the path of Islam in matters of Shariat, they tell the Muslims to follow Islam and act upto the ideals of the Holy Prophet—then why should they not follow these ideals of the Prophet with regard to his attitude towards the non-Moslems and make an abiding peace with them?

After his forced exile from Mecca, when he took shelter in Medina and was firmly established there, the first thing that he did was to convene a meeting representing all the communities including the Jews, the

Christians and the Idolaters. He made an Inter-national Alliance with them giving equal rights to all. He told them that the whole people of the country representing diverse religions should form one entire and undivided community—they should rise together, fall together and protect their country from all foreign invasions.

Below is given a summary of the Charter of freedom that the Holy Prophet of Islam gave to the non-Moslims. (Vide Ibni Hisham):

1. Treaty with the Jews

'This is the pledge of safety which Mohammad, the Prophet of God, gives to the Muslims of all tribes and the people irrespective of tribes to which they belong or the religion which they profess, who have promised to remain on peaceful terms with him and his followers. The state of war or of peace will apply to all Muslims and no Muslims will be permitted to fight or make peace with the enemies of Islam on his own responsibility. The Jews who live under our protection will be guarded against all sorts of persecutions and indignities and they will be equally entitled to our shelter, help and good treatment along with the Muslims. The Jews belonging to various tribes and all other inhabitants of Medina will make in conjunction with the Muslims, one Community and they will exercise the rights and perform the rites of their religion as freely as would the Muslims. Those who have entered into a treaty friendship with them and are under their protection will enjoy the same rights as are accorded to the Jews. The Jews will help the Muslims in defending Medina. All those who would accept this Alliance will be protected and guarded. The

friends of the Jews will be accorded the same honourable treatment as is accorded to themselves."

2. Charter to the Christians

The Charter of freedom which was first granted to the Christians of Najaran was latter on extended to the Christians of all countries. It reads thus:—

"This is the document which Mohammad, the Prophet of God, has caused to be written, so that there should remain no excuse for those coming after. I have caused this document to be written for all the Christian communities wherever they are living or will be living, for to-day and to-morrow. Any Muslim violating and abusing what is therein ordered would be regarded as a violation of God's testament and would be the breaker of His promise be he a king or a subject. I promise that any monk or wayfarer etc. who will seek my help, I will help him with all my strength. And I will defend the covenant against the persecution, injury and embarrassment by their enemies with all the strength that is my command. No bishop will be expelled from his bishopric, no monk from his monastery and no priest from his place of worship and no pilgrim will be detained in his pilgrimage. None of their churches and other places of worship will be desolated or destroyed or demolished. No material of their churches will be used for building mosques or houses for the Muslims. In religious controversies and disputations, the Christians should be talked to with civility, leniency. Every help should be given them in the repair of their churches,—those will be protected by the Muslims. Let this document be not disobeyed till the judgment-day."

3. Charter of Freedom to the Zoroastrians

Just like the Christians and the Jews the Holy Prophet of Islam gave charter of full liberty and protection to the Zoroastrians—who were idolators and fire-worshippers. It reads thus :

“This is a letter from Mohammad, the Apostle of Allah, to the Heads of Zoroastrians. This letter is a pledge of protection from me to them of their posterity for the safety of their persons whenever they live. They shall be entitled to the unrestricted use of the wells and meadows which are in their possession. They will not be maltreated and tyrannised—they will be allowed full freedom and liberty of action. They will enjoy the full and unrestricted mastery over their sacred places and the lands and jagirs connected with them. Let no one disobey and dispute this testament which I leave behind me, giving the Zoroastrians and their future generations the free and unrestricted exercise of their religion and the protection of the Muslims, whether they accept Islam or not.”

In conclusion let me commend the ideals of the Holy Prophet as set forth in these Charters, to the Muslims and non-Muslims of the present day. Toleration is one of the most essential teachings of Islam. The general principles of toleration have been embodied in these Charters and it should not be meant that they were applicable to the non-Muslims of prophet's days only—rather, as they were eternal principles of Islam, wherever the Muslims will happen to go or live as citizens, they shall treat the people of that country with that spirit of toleration which guided the Holy Prophet to conclude

treaty with the Jews, Christians, and the idolators of his day. In India we have ample scope to extend and apply the principles of Islam towards the question of Hindu-Moslem unity. If we approach the communal question through the light given to us by the Holy Prophet of Islam, I think, it will be more easily solved than all the attempts made by the so-called custodians of the Faith. It was not any policy, nor expediency, nor any imperialistic design that actuated the Holy Prophet to grant the non-Muslims of Arabia, the Charters of freedom—rather his principles were broad-based on the ideals of large-minded humanity, liberality, catholicity, generosity and a sincere love for the feelings of others. We hope that the Muslims of India will find a better guide in their Holy Prophet than in all those mushroom leaders, toadies, and sycophants who are guided more by personal considerations than by any feeling for distressed humanity.

PRINCE DARA SHIKOH'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

The intervening period that elapsed between the illness of the Emperor Shah Jahan and the final triumph of Aurangzeb, forms one of the blackest and darkest chapters in the otherwise glorious history of the Moghul hegemony in India. It was a period of plots, intrigues and dark conspiracies—it was a period which witnessed the imprisonment of a beloved father, and the savage butchery of innocent brothers by order of a "religious-minded" brother. No one who dispassionately views things in their true perspective, can fail to look upon this period without a feeling of shame and horror. Aurangzeb might be a devoted Moslem, a great ruler, and a brave general, but his attitude towards his father and brothers can never be justified and forgiven, either on the score of policy or of necessity,—it was not only a blunder but a political crime. None of his austere virtue and religious-minded outlook will expiate the sin that he has committed by shedding innocent blood of his kinsmen. Fanatically minded as Aurangzeb was, the first victim of his wrath fell on his eldest brother Dara Shikoh. Dara was branded as heretic and Kafir,—it was not difficult for Aurangzeb to procure a 'Fatwa' from the Ulemas who are in every age guided more by the outward forms of religion than by its inner essence.

And what was Dara's offence? Did he vilify the Holy Prophet of Islam? Did he reject Islam and accept another

religion as his own? No—nothing of the kind. His only offence was his attempt to understand religion in his own way and find out from every religion his own philosophy of life. Dara had the courage to hold and maintain his own conviction against the religious authorities of his time. He was carefully nurtured under the fostering care of his magnificent and beloved father who gave him every opportunity and freedom to cull knowledge from whoever it could be obtained. Well-versed in Islamic lore Dara's aspiring soul did not rest content in one thing only and he roamed from subject to subject till he found in the mystical aspect of religion the cherished ideals of his life he was in quest of. Afterwards he virtually became a mystic, mystic in thought, ideal and behaviour. Moslems there were and some of them of great eminence who were mystic to the core. Like them, Dara did not reject Islam, its teachings and ideals. He had the greatest veneration for the Holy Prophet of Islam. But what he believed was this that he did not consider the outward teachings of Islam sufficient for his own salvation. Like many renowned Sufis of Islam he endeavoured to grasp the Absolute Reality through intuitive perception. Thus there was no calculated heresy in his teachings and ideals. He was far above the ordinary level of the Ulemas of his age to be appreciated by them. He believed in the sanctity of the individual. He maintained that religion being a matter of the heart could be realised neither through reason nor through some formal observances. His constant association with great mystics of his age, both Hindus and Moslems had hardened his belief in pure mysticism. Like many other mystics, he cared little for the ethical and formal aspect of religion and was deeply

engrossed in the transcendental ideal of religion which provided ample scope for his spiritual fulfilment and opened for him the path to self-realisation, and internal purity.

His Catholicity

As noted above Dara did not reject Islam, but his catholic mind forbade him to hate other religions, specially Hinduism. In his eyes all religions were equal and beautiful and if properly understood were sufficient to solve the riddle of life. The more he studied Hindu religion, the more ardently he was drawn to its inner beauty. In this way he found that both Hinduism and Islam contain the same eternal truth which a shallow observer of religion failed to grasp. He then minutely compared Islam with Hinduism and tried to make a synthesis between the two. Dara freely mixed with the Hindu "Yogis" and Muslim Fakirs, talked with them and discussed with them. He then found that such synthesis would not be impossible. No one with whom he came in contact failed to be impressed by his catholicity of opinion and breadth of vision. He read the "Upanishad" with a much zeal and ardour as he read the Holy Koran. His broad and catholic mind did not find any contradictory thought and ideal in these two sacred books—but if there was any, it was in his eye, only apparent, but fundamentally they are one and the same thing. According to him, there is possibility of final reconciliation between the Koran and the Upanishad. There is a verse in the Quran :—"This is indeed, a noble Quran, in book kept hidden which none toucheth save the purified, a revelation from the Lord of the worlds". Dara says that this verse cannot imply

any reference to the Bible, old and new. The secret book is the Upanishad, as Upanishad means a book of esoteric knowledge. In this way he tried to interpret many noble verses of the Quran in the light of the Upanishad and vice versa. Every Moslem is acquainted with the words "Momin" (faithful), and "Kafir" (infidel). Technically Moslems are called 'Momin' and idolaters are called 'Kafir'. But Dara Shikoh would not accept this interpretation ; he would have his own explanation in the light of his own philosophy. He interpreted the words in his way:—The "faithful" (Momin) may be applied to that "Kafir" who has attained God, has seen Him and who knows Him ; while "Kafir" may be applied to that "Momin" (faithful) who has not attained God, has not seen Him and does not know Him." Dara could never understand how a non-Moslem simply for the offence that he did not utter the Islamic formula, would be branded as "Kafir" and be sent to eternal perdition ; and how a Moslem in spite of his sins of commission and omission would be sent to eternal Heaven simply for the credit that he had once in his life uttered the formula. If self-purification be the essence of life, any man irrespective of his religious belief, may attain to that end by following a path of virtue and piety. It is impossible that a man with such catholic views would be allowed to live freely in a world which was in the thorough grip of the fanatics.

A Versatile Scholar

Dara was a versatile scholar and a writer of a good number of books. He wrote several treatises concerning his ceaseless quest for ideal perfection ; and in those

treatises he reveals his philosophy of life to the full light of the day. Almost all his writings represent vehemently a reaction against the rigid orthodoxy of his time where form was everything and matter and essence nothing. Ultimate truth cannot be attained through soulless formalities and senseless observances of prayers and fastings, 'pujas' and 'jainas' and other prescribed rules of conduct. "Return unto your ownself" that was his ideal. He relied for his knowledge on certain ecstatic states of his heart which lead to the complete identification of the individual with the Being of beings.

According to him, supreme Bliss of knowledge and truth is to be attained not by intellect, but by an appeal to intuition and feeling. It is through these means that the union of the human spirit with the Divine Being—the transformation of the duality into unity—would be possible.

This was the philosophy of Dara, and that at an age when "obedience to Authority" was the order of the day. The Ulemas and the orthodox elements of the society did not like him, they hated him and branded him as Kafir, but the mass were sincerely devoted to him. The heir-apparent of the Moghal throne, they looked upon him as a great soul, a great man and a great prince. In his personal qualities he was far above the level of the ordinary people. What Manucie said of him is worthy of note here: "A man of dignified manners, of a comely countenance, joyous and polite in conversation, ready and gracious of speech, of most extraordinary kindness and compassion but over-confident in his opinion of himself, considering himself competent in all things and having no need of advisers. He was very fond of music

and dancing''. (*Storia do Mogol*, Vol. I P. 221). He was no less an artist and art critic. His productions are still extant which would tell the world what he was.

Such a man, or rather such a noble soul was killed at the hand of Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb guarding the honour of Islam, if Dara was allowed to live, the holy religion would never have faced any imminent danger of total annihilation, but the world would have been benefited by the mature fructification of Dara's ideals and teachings. If Dara was wrong he was given the full penalty of what he had done or said, but if he was right, or if his guilt was not so serious, who would atone for the innocent blood that was shed in the name of Islam? Could not the God of Islam out of His abundant mercy forgive one of His way-ward slaves? If Dara was an infidel, as he was branded by the Ulemas of his day, a host of Moslem Sufis ought to have shared the same fate ; but they were untouched by any Ulema and Dara was mercilessly put to death. It smacked more of politics than of religion. In these days of communal tension and acrimony the more we think of Dara, the more we are inclined to believe that if Dara would have succeeded Shah Jahan to the throne of the Moghal Empire, there would have been greater possibility of union and fusion between the Hindus and Moslems. To-day, at this distance of time and age we sincerely bewail the loss of a man who might have changed the destiny of India in more than one way.

AN OPEN LETTER TO SIR MD. IQBAL

REVERED POET,—It is unusual for a layman to address an open letter to a great poet like you, whose inspiring words and lofty idealism have sent a thrill of sensation to the Muslims of the present day, young and old. As a poet we love you, we admire you, take pride in you ; as a successor of Hafiz and Rumi,—as an exponent of the true beauty of Islam we acknowledge you as our spiritual guide ; as a philosopher and poet-prophet we find you a strong pillar of our faith in these days of scepticism and agnosticism. We are fondly hoping for that happy day when your glorious achievements in poetry and philosophy will receive world-recognition and together with Tagore and Raman your name will make up the trio of those illustrious Indians whom the intellectual world of Europe would not fail to recognize by giving them the highest honour at their disposal. As long as you lived apart from men and from all political quagmires, worshipped beauty like a devotee, were perfectly content to write what was in your heart, or to reflect some splendour of the natural world, and remained “as ever in the great Task-master’s eye” so long there was no murmur against you, rather there was something like hero-worship for you. But as soon as you came down from the sacred peak of Parnassus to the narrower field of politics where pettiness and meanness are reigning supreme, a thousand voices rose against you which, if continued unabated, will mar all your

prospect. It is with the noble intention of restoring you to that resplendent region which is the favourite haunt of poets of all ages and climes that we are sending out this open letter to you through the press with an ardent request to eschew politics and be immersed in poetry dallying with fancy and imagination.

It added no glory to Milton, when he by abandoning poetry indentified himself wholly with politics and controversies of the day, and the few years of his political life was a barren period of attacks and reprisals which invoked censure for him from every quarter not excepting his warmest supporters. There is deep-rooted prejudice among the people of all countries against a poet who intimately concerns himself with politics, specially when that politics is directed against the freedom-movement of the country. This feeling has its origin in solicitude not only for politics but also for the poet himself. Because it is a recognized fact that a poet's sphere of activities is other than politics, that a poet's lyre will sing other note sublimer and nobler than politics. A poet might attempt to reform society, to purge religion of all grossness and impurity and lastly to be an intrepid fighter for a cause dear to him, but he can never be a politician, a diplomat, a negotiator of peace between contending parties and an intriguer, a plotter and thousand other things inseparably connected with politics. Amidst the din and bustle of the battlefield the people will acclaim with ecstatic pleasure the sudden appearance of a poet who would, like the celestial angel, infuse courage into the minds of the degenerate and would sing of immortality to the ears of the dying men. But no one would like the inter-

ference of the poet at the time of peace negotiation when terms of peace are settled between contending parties, nor would any one seek the advice of the poet as to the exact time and manner when and how a battle is to be fought and won. Here one would like to tell a poet "thus far and no further,—do not exceed your limit". The poet's function is not to settle diplomatic relations with others, but to beautify the distant landscape with the flash of his wings.

Oh mighty-minded organ voice of Islam! we expect other things from you than politics and diplomacy. When we found you leaving your accustomed haunts of dales and rivers, daffodils and daisy, oceans, mountains and sky, and of bowery loneliness, coming down to the netherlands of politics and diplomacy, tricks and falsehoods, we shuddered with horror and cried out piteously—what a holocaust of poetic inspiration at the altar of pettiness and selfishness! We were simply charmed at the majesty and beauty of the theme of your ever memorable poem—"Chino—Arab—Hamara" (China and Arabia are mine) , but we never expected that at the fag-end of your life you would stake your all—your poetry, inspiration fame and name, to realise the dream of your life into action by attempting to create a theocratic Muslim state in these days when democracy and self-determination are on the lips of every one. As long as your idealism was abstract no one raised any hostile resentment against you, but when you tried to become practical by attempting to do the most impractical thing then only you are being assailed from every quarter, even from that of your greatest admirers. We mean no discredit to you or any other poet living or

dead, when we emphatically hold the view that a poet is wholly incapable of dealing with politics. If anything is alien to the nature of a poet it is politics. And moreover, when a poet is presumed to be above all party and party-politics, he should not associate his name with one party or other lest he degenerates himself into a mere pamphleteer as the great poet Milton became.

When we found you as president of Muslim League and Muslim Conference or as a delegate to the R. T. C. we found "as a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage"!—in a sacred drama where the lives of millions of people are enacted. All your public utterances either at the League or at the Conferences, are like unpractical, visionary and dream-like rhapsodies of an enthusiast who turns a deaf ear to all that happens before his very eyes. It is by reading your presidential address that a suspicion arose in the minds of others as to the *bonafides*, the sincerity, of the demands of the Muslims and you never attempted to dispel that doubt from their minds. It would have been better for you if you did not accept the offer of the Government to attend the R. T. C. What would you, a poet of "Asrar-i-Khudi", do at the R. T. C. where the greatest diplomats of England were out to frustrate the greatest achievements of the Indians? It is due to your goodness, simplicity and sincerity that you were not able to see through the games of those who were associates of Mr. Benthall to deny to India her legitimate rights. We expected that after your miserable failure at the last R. T. C. you would be benefited by the lessons of experience and shun politics for ever, but our wonder knew no bounds when we found you again at the head

of a party which is looked upon by many Muslims with a suspicious eye as a meeting place of *Johukums* and *Apkewastes*. We do not know what are the factors through whose influence you came down from your favourite haunt and joined issue with reactionaries, but this much is certain that by taking a direct part in politics you have degraded your position. In the words of Browning we may accuse you—"Just for a handful of dust he left us, just for a riband to stick in his cat."

You may say by way of reply that it is for your love of Islam that you have done all these unpleasant things. But you ought to have known it beforehand by your researches in Islamic lore that that sort of love of Islam will never justify you to support unflinching and uncompromising communalism in all its phases. Islam has nothing to do with base and aggressive communalism which is the fundamental principle of some of your colleagues and co-workers. Islam means peace—peace with God and humanity. What have you and your party done to achieve that end, to establish harmony and concord between the different communities of India? By its various activities the Muslim Conference has thrown out a challenge to those Muslims who believe that Islam is a *via-media* to settle all international and intercommunal disputes. It is therefore painful to find you at the head of this Conference whose chief aim is to strengthen the fetters of the country.

That you have been hoodwinked and stupefied by those with whom you have joined issue is evident from your absolute silence with regard to certain facts which lowered the prestige and honour of Islam before the world. The publication of the "Benthal Circular" has

discredited the fair name of every Muslims of India. What have you done to restore the lost honour of Islam whose life-breath is independence? Did words fail you to enter a note of protest against the nefarious circular? Then with regard to the recent "manifesto" it must be said that you have shirked your responsibility by merely denying that your party has any knowledge about it. This is an official way of denying a fact. We ask, have you not felt yourself humiliated at that mischievous manifesto? Has not that "manifesto" lowered the prestige of Islam? A denial of any knowledge of it shows that at least you do not approve of it. But you never expressed your disapproval in even tolerably strong words so that the authors of the "manifesto" might know that the whole of Muslim India has condemned it!

Then came the unmerited utterance of the Secretary of State for India which has even unnerved the staunchest of Moderates. But we wonder at your optimism, which is no optimism, but an abject surrender to the forces of reaction. Who authorised you to adopt the most unconstitutional method of postponing the date of the Muslim Conference by your presidential ukase? It seems that you have been so much influenced by dictation from Simla that in order to avoid any criticism of the policy of the Secretary of State and the Government, you tried to postpone the date. These matters unmistakably show that you are incapable of dealing with any situation which becomes serious due to some unavoidable circumstances.

Considering all these things—considering the fact that you will never be able to turn a true politician, that you have miserably failed to deal with any situation that arose out of political tangle and that you will never be

able to command the same respect and love as you do in the capacity of a poet— we again request you sincerely and ardently to abstain from politics and diplomacy. From your past actions it has become apparent that taking undue advantage of the simplicity of your nature, some interested parties have practically tricked you into their snare. When we found you as the President of the Muslim Conference, issuing orders for convening or postponing a meeting, holding confidential communication with highly undesirable persons, with the enemies of Islam and India, throwing out empty threats for taking recourse to direct action, but at the eleventh hour cunningly sneaking out from such course,—then we only wondered at the amazing inconsistency of a scheming poet. Could Shelly, Keats, Wordsworth and Coleridge degenerate themselves in the same manner as you have done? Has not Rabindra Nath Tagore placed himself far above politics and diplomacy and therefore has he not acquired the universal veneration from everywhere? What made it impossible for you to abstain from the filth and dirt of politics? Great poetry and little mind always go ill together. Poetry can never flourish and bud forth in the hot-house of politics, it soaks up the perennial fountain of inspiration. We always apprehend that in Iqbal the politician we will lose Iqbal the poet, which will be a great loss to the country and community. Your inspiration is needed elsewhere than in the arena of politics. Politics is a hard game for a poet like you, which you will be never able to play out successfully. It is our earnest desire to find you above all pettiness and squibblings, raised to a place which is the fit abode of poets of all ages from where all will find guidance

and consolation, light and inspiration in weal or woe. Therefore with bended knees and folded hands we request you not to allow your esteemed name to be associated with reactionary parties—with all these misguided geniuses whose selfishness has passed all reasonable limit. A poet is after all a poet—and a poet you are and we wish to see you a genuine poet all throughout your life uncontaminated by filth and dirt, pettiness and selfishness—uncorrupted by the prosaic monotony of the prosaic world. We pause for a reply.

DEPRESSED CLASSES AND DUTIES OF MUSLIM

We do not know what are the hidden causes that are guiding some of the worthy stalwarts of Islam to deprecate the noble action of Mahatma Gandhi in making a holocaust of his life for the uplift of the depressed classes. Cast out of society, out of all touches of civilization and all the amenities and civic rights these depressed classes are people who are living in perpetual bondage, and in chronic misery from generation to generation, without receiving the least notice from the advanced and favoured classes. It is indeed a wonder of wonders that the keen interests taken by one single man has raised them from the neglected position to the forefront of world topics. The upper classes have now realised the wrong and injustice done to the down-trodden people and are now trying to find out the ways and means how best to ameliorate their condition, how to remove all the impediments in the path of their advancement and to raise them to the status of man.

Ideals of Islam

A question arises whose is the cause of the depressed classes? Gandhiji is a Hindu-saint and the depressed classes belong mostly to the Hindus. Is it then the cause of the Hindus alone? Have other communities nothing to do with it? A little reflection will show that it is not the cause of the Hindus alone, it is the cause of every

religion of every creed, of which the ulterior aim is the service of mankind. Nay further more, we make bold to declare that the cause of the depressed classes is the cause of Islam, as long as Islam will acclaim itself to be the religion of humanity, a religion which seeks to establish harmony, peace and concord.

If Islam means peace and if the aim of the chosen religion of God is to establish peace between God and man then there can not be a single Muslim who can afford to neglect for the uplift of the depressed classes. Ever since the dawn of creation the question of the depressed and the down-trodden people has engrossed the deepest attention of great saints, seers, philanthropists and prophets of all ages. Among the many phases of the great religious upheavals in every age, the most prominent was how to save the down-trodden people from the tyranny of wealth, birth and power. It was the peculiar distinction of the Holy Prophet of Islam to declare a crusade at an early date against the terrible inequality and injustice that separated one man from another. Just as man is born free, so also is man born equal, and as such there ought not to be any distinction between man and man. All men are brothers is the cardinal teaching of all religions, so also of Islam. Islam has done more, it gave a practical realisation to its teachings, equality and fraternity is a living reality in Islam. It was only in Islam that the slaves could become the Emperor of the Faithful. Have not the Muslims any duty towards the depressed and down-trodden people who are being tyrannised everywhere by the upper classes? We think it our duty to tell every believing Muslim to take up in right earnest the cause of the depressed

for self-purification, his ideal of penance may be different from that of Gandhiji, but he may devote a portion of his life to the service of the depressed classes. He may organise numerous social service associations, he may establish schools to impart education among them, he may carry on other propaganda work for their health, hygiene and wealth.

Besides the Harijans among the Hindus, there is a class of men among the Muslims who hold analogous position in the Muslim society. Up till now "the worthy trustees of Muslim interest" have done nothing for them, they are callous about the Muslim classes. When Moulvi Abdus Samad, M.L.C., raised the question of the "Muslim Depressed Classes" in the Bengal Council, he was heckled by the so-called aristocrat; but can any one deny the existence of such backward classes among the Muslims who are practically the outcast of the society? We do not know for whose benefit the communalist leaders have set up a loud uproar to safeguard the Muslim interest, when at their very gate millions of backward and down-trodden Muslim masses are sorely groaning under the tyranny of the upper classes. It is these people who are denouncing Gandhiji and his noble mission. In conclusion, we are again drawing the attention of the entire community to the problem of the depressed classes and exhorting them to take up the cause of the depressed classes, whose cause is really the cause of Islam, and whose uplift is the noble mission of Islam, the elevation of the depressed classes is the elevation of Islam.

WHAT IS MUSLIM INTEREST ?

“We want our interest protected, our rights safeguarded and a place for us in the sun and nothing else”—such is the sum and substance of all those whinings and groanings that were made by the trusted leaders of the Muslims whether in the R. T. C. or in many other political conferences. The cue was taken up in right earnest by our benevolent rulers who in their readiness to save the Muslims from the grip of the Hindus, exhibited such a degree of cautionsness stubbornness, kindness, and moderation as far out-shone those of the Muslim leaders themselves. They became more anxious to safeguard the Muslim interest than the Muslims are. The whole atmosphere is now thick with the problem of Muslim interest. From every lip of the Muslims you will hear the word “Muslim interest”. The Muslims, Europeans, Anglo-Indians and our benevolent rulers, all will vie with each other in demanding proper safeguard for the Muslim interest. Perhaps there never was a time when persons and communities belonging to opposite and hostile camps were so solidly united together to protect the Muslim interest,—from whom? Not from the evil effects of slavery, not from the anti-Indian policy of an alien Government, but from the hands of the Hindus who do not ungrudgingly concede to the Muslims, a few additional seats in the Legislature, and a few lucrative jobs under the Government services.

14 Points of Mr. Jinnah

From a perusal of 14 points of Mr. Jinnah we have clear idea of what are the demands of the Muslim leaders, but from H. H. Aga Khan down to the meanest of our leaders, no one has ever attempted to give a clear idea of what are the real and vital interests which will give them a fitting place in the sun. The fact is that none of our leaders know what are really the interests of the Muslims or they care little for the Muslim interests. They care more for their own interests than for the interests of the entire community. And for their own benefit and to secure for themselves the spoils of the coming reforms (which will be given to them like a sop to Cerberus) they have taken recourse to these tactics and have been successful in hoodwinking the entire community.

Demands—No Interests

It does not require any ingenuity of brain and far-sighted statesmanship to understand the difference between the demands of the Muslims and the interests of the Muslims. A Muslim may demand anything and everything he likes, but when we understand the nature of the thing that he demands for his proper safeguard, we only laugh at his foolishness, we are ashamed of the utter hollowness of his ideals and we pity for his ignorance of the true state of the country. The tremendous disproportion between the demands and interests of the Muslims will reveal one salient fact that these demands are not meant to safeguard the Muslim interests, but their importance lies elsewhere. A little reflection will

show that the demands in the 14 points will not give security and peace to the Muslims, will not save them from country-wide-trade-depression, will not place them on a sound financial footing, will not give them better education, will not provide for them better sanitation and last of all, will not invigorate and vitalise an emasculated community from degradation and degeneration. The utmost that these demands can do is that they will help our so-called leaders to maintain their ill-gotten and unmerited position for many days to come against the first onslaught of the reawakened Muslim youths who are now dreaming away their valuable time under the soporific effects of the cursed 14 points.

Stumbling Block To Progress

Apart from the general interests of the country as a whole, the general welfare and prosperity of the entire nation, the protection and the thriving of the trade and commerce of the country, what could be the particular and special interest of a community which comprises nearly one-third of the whole population of India, that require special safe-guards which are in reality no safe-guards, but are serving as a stumbling block to the progress of the country,—passes our imagination. How can the Muslim leaders think of safeguarding the interests of their own community when the vital things are wholly and inseparably linked with the entire body politic of the country. By special favour and concession how can they protect their special interests when the arc of India's progress is hopelessly tossed on the perilous sea of life.

Serving In Fool's Paradise

If complete independence is not Muslim interest, if the absolute transfer of power from irresponsible bureaucracy to the elected representatives of the people is not Muslim interest, if the fundamental rights are not Muslim interest, if complete control of Indians over finance, army, police, foreign relations are not Muslim interest, then we do not know what are the proper Muslim interests that would give the Muslims a better and secure footing under the sun. For these things, a proper safeguard is useless and worthless. And without any special safeguard, these things are the best securities of a nation. So also of the Muslims. We do not know how long will the Muslims live in the fool's paradise and how long will our leaders delude the community and entice them away from the path of duty and glory by their siren song of Muslim interest. But this is certain that as long as the Muslims will remain under the spell of the so-called leaders, so long will they have to lie in the abyss of darkness. Unprotected and unsafeguarded they will know how to protect themselves and will ultimately protect themselves against any unforeseen calamity, but artificially protected they will lose their own vitality and will entirely forget how to protect themselves without the prop of others.

Want Of Perception

Thus we see that our leaders due to their littleness of mind, want of inner perception and foresight, have failed to realise the essential things that are necessary to safeguard the Muslim interests. The time has come

when the Muslims would be warned against the mischievous activities of our so-called leaders. The general interests of the country are the only interest, and a Muslim should not have any other special interest. Let the country thrive, let the resources of the country increase, let commerce and industry flourish, let agriculture prosper, let the peasantry and labour of the country meet their two ends at ease, let their granary be full, and the Muslim interests will be thoroughly protected, they will not require even 1 point of the 14 points. Let India be free and let the blessings of freedom be showered upon the Muslims—compared with which all the advantages in the 14 points will pale into insignificance.

Not A Separate Body

The Muslims are not a separate body of people, are not nomadic tribe having no fixed habitation, are not a passive spectacular resident of a dependent country, but are an integral part of India and are inseparably connected with all that stands for India's greatness and glory. They will rise with India and fall with India. Hence India's interests are the best interests of the Muslims for which he will die, by which he will stand against all temptations, odds and difficulties.

H. H. THE AGA KHAN'S MISSION

Nearly two months have passed away since H. H. the Aga Khan came down to India to receive tributes of honour and respect from his numerous followers, disciples, admirers and worshippers. It is indeed a matter of great fortune for the Muslims of India to have the companionship of such a great person as the Aga Khan who like a guardian angel (?) is ever ready to protect them from any mishap. He has been kind enough to come down to India from his Olympic abode in the palatial cities of Europe to pay a visit to his devotees and render them the necessary help in their onward march towards progress, unity and consolidation.

At the present moment perhaps no name is more important, more endearing and more inspiring than that of H. H. the Aga Khan. Whether in the R. T. C. or in numerous other organisations of the Muslims there is only one man whose influence pervades them and through them, whose ideals of life guide them in every sphere of their activity—it is the Rt. Hon'ble Aga Khan. Lord heads in worshipful reverence before spiritual and temporal of the Muslims of India. Ye Muslims! bow down your heads in worshipful reverence before His Highness the Aga Khan and take a long lease of a sacred plot in Heaven from His Holiness when he is at your very door.

A busy man as he is we have heard that he came to India for very many purposes. But it appears that

the vital reason of his holy advent is to establish a bond of unity among the different and conflicting groups of the Muslims. We do not know when and how and why there took place a rift in the lute, a cleavage in the already invulnerable phalanx of the Muslims which stood them in good stead in the last R.T.C. against all odds and difficulties. Perhaps no community in India exhibited a more solid spectacle of unity than the stalwart followers of the Aga Khan.

Yet we hear that he came to India to unify the Muslims. So long the whole world and specially the British world was given to understand that the Muslims were solidly united under the able leadership of the Aga Khan and now comes the terrible news that the bond that was established at the expense of India's freedom has been shattered to pieces and matters have come to such a pass that it could not be properly made up unless His Holiness personally interferes in the affair. It is indeed a mystery of all mysteries how could the R.T.C. unite a group of persons among whom there never was any bond of unity except the slender tie of faith—rather there were many disintegrating elements among them which made unity impossible. Hence it was a foregone conclusion that such unity would come to an end at the first moment when their personal interests would be jeopardised. But we did not except it so early.

The so-called unity of the so-called leaders of our community that was made a parade of at the last R.T.C. was in fact no unity. Any one who has the faintest idea of the current politics of the day, of the dual policy of construction and repression that was steadily pursued by the Government, will not fail to probe into the

mysteries of our Muslim leaders in the last R.T.C. They were delegates by courtesy, but in reality no delegates—only subservient nominees of the Government and went there to represent the British interests as against the interests of the Indians. Truly speaking they were almost to a man joint wrong-doers and as long as their object was common and undivided there was unity and solidarity. But when the common object was gone, when nothing was left to be done for the protection of the British interests their unity was broken and tattered. The unholy alliance that was formed to make India a permanent bondman of England, had performed its part and hence such alliance was broken up. Therefore the Muslim delegates found themselves again on the same spot where they had been a few years ago, guided by the same sordid motive, inspired by the same personal interests. In vain will the Aga Khan make an attempt for unity among them. On the surface there may be a parade of unity but deep down the ground there are deeper causes which might unsettle all the hopes of the Aga Khan. So we were not at all surprised when the news came that the Aga Khan's attempt for unity had ended in fiasco. Himself a gigantic hoax, all his attempts melted into nothing.

Nothing is more absurd, more preposterous, more foolish than an attempt for unity among men who are never guided by any lofty motive, never inspired by any patriotic and philanthropic idealism, rather whose public-life is a shameful record of selfishness, narrowness and infidelity to the cause of the country. Have they set before the Muslims any programme of work, any high and great ideal of life? We hear from them that

'community' is their watch-word ; but have they set before their community the duty they owe to their country as its dutiful citizens? Leagues and Conferences are useless things if they cannot give any programme of work. Of what use is unity itself if there is no programme of work, no ideal to pursue and no difficulty to overcome?

It seems that the Aga Khan has reconstituted the Muslim Conference with a strong body of executives. But when we find their names, we are hopelessly disappointed. All those useless co-operators and 'Jo-hukums', who have made it a profession of their life to betray the cause of their country for a mess of pottage and all those rabid communalists who have put a permanent obstacle to the solution of the communal problem, have been given a prominent place in the new executive of the Muslim Conference. So the newly constituted Conference becomes in the hand of the dictator a veritable meeting-place of the royalists and loyalists which would serve as a permanent garrison of the Britishers against the faintest lisps of the awakened people.

We ask in amazement, do the Government require any safeguards and special protection for the British interests in India when the Muslim Conference under the dictatorship of the Aga Khan is constituted by these tried loyalists whose past deeds do not betray the least suspicion in the minds of the Government that such well behaved persons can ever go against the best interests of England and English rule in India? To them the interests of England and Islam are one and identical and are mutually convertible terms. It matters little if

the Muslim weavers of India sustain losses to provide the Lancashirites with materials of luxury. Hence the Aga Khan has founded the East and West Corporation Ltd., and hence he has equipped the Muslim Conference with men who will prove more friendly to England than to the toiling and striving millions of India.

By many Muslims the Aga Khan is looked upon as the leader, guide and dictator of Islam in India. No Muslim can forget the sinister part that he has taken in winning back the Muslims to the fold of the Britishers who were going to be alienated and weaned away from British friendship due to the Khilafat wrongs. The so-called advantages that the Muslims have got in the Communal Award are partly due to the influence of the Aga Khan. But who will tell the Aga Khan that by the Award the Muslims got no intrinsic gain? What the Muslims require at this critical time is not the addition of a few seats in the Council—the only thing that he has in store for the wretched community. But the Aga Khan's public service is a barren record of some empty hopes and high-sounding words signifying nothing. Practically he has done nothing for the community and a man of his disposition can do nothing for them because he does not know where the shoe pinches—he wears a different shoe. Wedded to a life of luxury, ease and merry-making and spending the greater part of his life in foreign countries, the Aga Khan has set before his community no noble ideal, no beacon-light—nothing of the kind. The Muslims may find in the Aga Khan the typical illustration of how Nero could fiddle while Rome was burning. We bear no grudge, no ill-feeling towards the Aga Khan the man, but when he poses as the leader

and assumes the dictatorship of a down-trodden community and when in his capacity as a dictator he comes forward to interfere in matters which exclusively concerns us, the poor Muslim mortals of India, our wrath knows no bound. Then it is that we humbly request him: "Brother Aga Khan! leave us severely alone, do not intermeddle in our affairs, *we are not horses ; the best field of your activity is the race course, where your holiness's fashionable horses run a gallant race—not the poor, fallen Muslims of India.*"

RELIGION AND INTER-COMMUNAL UNITY

Unless a religion can stand the test of 'Time,' it is no religion and things essential for a religion to stand the tests of time lie in its inherent power of elasticity, in its adaptibility to adjust itself to all the varying circumstances of time and place. When a religion is stereotyped to a rigid form, to a hard and fast rule, to an unalterable and unreasonable dogma, it is doomed to destruction as it cannot then defend itself against the onslaught of time—time the vanisher of all things. It is difficult to believe that the early founders of religion although they had divine message from above, could conceive of every phenomenon that might take place after millions of years when they first delivered their message to the distracted mankind of their age. But their message must have contained some eternal universal truth, some ideals of supreme loftiness, which by implication, analogical deduction, and other reasoning processes may be extended with impunity to many new cases and complications unheard of and unimagined by the early founders of religion. It is on this applicability of the teachings and ideals of religion to the new problems and cases that might crop up from time to time, that the claim of the superiority of one religion over the other, chiefly rests. The more easily the ideals of a religion can be made applicable and flexible to meet the requirements of the different ages and climate, the more permanent, endurable and practicable it would be.

Essential Features

One of the most essential features that can give superiority, permanency and comprehensive character to a particular religion over the other, is its attitude towards those who refuse to adhere to that religion and prefer another to it. It is a known fact that the followers of one religion are ever ready to send the adherents of the other one to eternal perdition,—but this attitude is certainly with regard to their soul, to their condition after death. Be that as it may, the attitude of one religion towards the followers of another so far as their body and material existence on this earth is concerned, ought to be humane, benevolent and noble. It is a bad morality, a mischievous theory to believe that, because a person does not accept my religion and thereby does not save his soul according to my ideals, therefore I shall not have any duty towards him—therefore I shall persecute him, torture him —place him before an inquisitorial court to answer the charge of infidelity and blasphemy and put every obstacle in his way so that he might be hindered from following a course which his conscience dictates him to do.

What is it to me, to you or to any other person, that some persons, say X, Y, Z do not acknowledge the existence of God and thus turn out atheist—that they are agnostic, that they do not save their soul by following the most perfect religion in the world? Let it be a matter between them and their God, between them and their conscience. To me, to you and to the thousands of other people of the world those atheists and infidels and those untouchables are neat little human beings,

our next-door neighbours, our fellow-brethren, our companions, our beloved friends, nay a bone of our bone and a flesh of our flesh—the most perfect creature of our Bènign God, entitled to our full protection from torture, ignomy and all sorts of undue interference with his actions. Religion should exclusively deal with the soul of a man,—it should not meddle with his body,—the tabernacle of God on the earth. Let the body of a man, to whatever community he may belong, be the protected interest of every religion and every other human being,—let us treat all men equally, justly and impartially.

But the history of religion is a lamentable tale of persecution of people for their religious opinion. In one way or other the followers of one religion always persecuted and tortured the followers of another religion. The pages of such history have become red with the innocent blood of human beings,—beings that obeyed their conscience and not the dictates of fanatically minded people.

But who is to be blamed for this? Is it the religion, or the followers and the zealots of a religion? Far from charging religion, which is by itself a sacred thing, with any evil to which its followers are primarily subject, we make those fanatics wholly responsible for all the evils who little understanding the quintessence of religion, manipulate it to their sordid desire and turn religion into an engine of oppression. Religion, like money, in the hands of proper persons, is a blessing and a mercy to the world—but in the hand of an avaricious and fanatical person, is a curse to humanity—a stumbling obstacle to the establishment of peace and friendship

between different communities owning allegiance to different forms of religion.

Religion—A Spiritual Matter

Religion is and should always be primarily a spiritual matter—a thing not of this world, but of the other world. If the zealots of religion could keep this limitation in their mind, and as such did not confound things worldly with things other-worldly, perhaps there would never have arisen any occasion of such things as crusade, inquisition, persecution, communal riot and the problem of untouchability—that had many a time besmeared the pages of history with the blood of human beings—perhaps people professing different religions would have lived together in peace, friendship like brothers of the same family. But unfortunately religion was mixed up with knotty politics, and in most cases parties preponderated over things spiritual and thus marred that better prospect of humanity. When religion thus degenerated into diplomacy, duplicity, expediency and into the noxious theory of "End justifies the means"—then it is that religion loses all moral control over its adherents—then it is that religion becomes an engine of oppression to others. And hence the first duty of the lover of every religion, who desires that man should be more spiritual than diplomat, more moral than politician, more consistent, more truthful, faithful and honest than opportunist and self-seeking,—is to separate politics from religion, divorce from religion all diplomacy, duplicity, the bane of all moral obligation, things alien to the nature and spirit of all true religions.

When I insist that religion should be made separate from politics, I do not mean that a politician or a statesman shall not have any religion to follow, shall not be a lover of God. What I mean is this: religion shall not be utilised as a pretext for any self-aggrandisement—it shall not be made the basis of the solution of any national, international, political and economic problem. In these things religion should be left to be purely a personal matter—it shall not influence or affect any matter which deals with such things as the relation of one man to the other. People professing different faith, should live in a country like several brothers in a joint family where each brother might have different tendencies, inclinations, and eccentricities, but they all live together and make joint effort for the common welfare of their country, no matter whatever way one differs from the other in the matter of religion and faith. This is what I mean by separation of politics from the sphere of religion.

Toleration Urged

What has been said above is nothing but a strong plea for religious toleration. Every one should be given full liberty to accept or reject a religion and for which neither the state, nor the society should place any ban upon him. If this sort of toleration is extended to its logical consequence, then the question of music before mosque or cow-killing and untouchability will never arise, will never mar the friendly relation between the different communities in the country. Religion if it has any pretension to have its origin in the Divine Being Himself, then it can never be a hindrance to the estab-

lishment of inter-communal unity—rather it is a great cementing bond, an invulnerable tie, that draws one closer to the other,—it is a living ideal, a patent power that makes one nobler, grander, purer than he had been ever.

We in India do often and anon hear about the communal problem that disturbs the peace of the country, that induces one to kill the other,—and it is said that this is due to the love of the people for their God and religion. Alas for that country, whose people shed innocent blood for the love of God, rather than protect them from the grip of hangmen. Day by day Indian situation is becoming graver and graver, because at present religion is manipulated by the malignant wire-pullers to serve their sordid purposes. All the true lovers of God and religion should unite together to make an end of those unseemly affairs,—to release religion from the meshes of politics. It is a disgrace, a standing reproach to every lover of God that the religion of the Merciful God instead of proving mercy and love to humanity would become a veritable engine of oppression to the world. Whatever causes might induce one to kill other, to hate other and rob other, let it not be in the name of God and religion,—let him not put God to shame—let him not humiliate those disinterested saints and lovers of religion, those martyrs of religion who lived and died for humanity.

THE NATIONAL IDEAL

When the whole country was expecting every moment that the accredited leaders, who met at Allahabad a few months ago, would come out successfully in framing a formula for the solution of the Communal Problem, the melancholy news that they had failed to evolve a formula, gave to the people a rude shock. For years past attempts have been made by leaders of all shades of opinion to solve the problem, but to what effect? Like a mountain in labour all those attempts produced nothing, rather every such attempt gave a fresh lease of life to Communalism, and each case of acquiescence in the demands was invariably followed by a freshly augmented demands, unheard of by the first leaders of the communalists. By sincere efforts of some of the leaders of the country, who in order to make matters more easy, yielded to the communalists, some pacts and secret arrangements were sometimes made with the high priests of the communalists, but those pacts and arrangements could not keep intact the house of cards upon which the grand edifice was sought to be built. The reason why an ideal formula could not have been possible within the recent time is to be sought, not in the incompleteness of the pacts themselves, or in any other defects inherent in any device made by human brain, but the reason lies elsewhere. There being no real communal problem, the interested parties always try to uphold a defective cause which had the immediate

effect of satisfying the sordid motive of the leaders—time-serving leaders and martyrs without shedding the least blood for their own community.

Whenever any attempt is being made to solve the communal problem, we hear the oft-repeated cant 'Change your heart'. But never was there such misrepresentation of words as the above 'cant'. To speak the truth the 'cant' practically signifies nothing in Indian Politics to-day. The communally minded men of each sect would sit (probably in light mood and sometimes under the safe convoy of officials) in a solemn conclave, would discuss some matters among themselves, would fix upon some points and then come out exultantly with some "minimum irreducible demands" and would insist others on their total acceptance. When these types of men will represent Unity Conference, they would demand a 'change of heart' from others without doing the same thing on their behalf. The same spirit pervades everywhere. The Central Policy of the communalists seems to be that others would sacrifice and make room for them and they would get the lion's share. But where is then the change of heart? Where is mutual sacrifice and 'give and take'? Nowhere. 'Change of heart' is a huge mockery, thus there is no change of heart, no question of modifying the demands, no willingness to place the interest of country above the pettiness and emptiness of communalists ;—yet some leaders are still hoping to come to an agreement with communalists, when hope is a delusion—"a figment of the heat—oppressed mind".

The only thing which has frustrated the attempts of the leaders is the absolute lack of sacrifice on the part

of the communalists, Hindus and Muslims. If the communalists, on the pretext of safeguarding the interests of their community, go on multiplying demand upon demand and the Nationalist leaders, fearing lest the communalists should betray the cause of the country would go on surrendering to communalists at every step then there can be nothing more tragical at this stage of the country—a temporary expedient can not cure an ill, if it is chronic and permanent, rather it sometimes aggravates the situation. Some limits must be set to the demands of the communalists—some such words as 'thus far and no further' must be explicitly told to them so that they may know that their constant whining could no more have ready response from those in whom the hopes of the country are centred.

The past history has shown that the surrender-policy of our leaders cannot be justified on any ground,—it can neither solve the communal problem, nor can bring the communalists under one common banner of Indian Nationalism. The surrender-policy is responsible for complicating the problems. The National leaders ought to have nipped it in the bud, but the earliest sign of communalism,—once leniency is shown, the moment it becomes fatal to the cause of nationalism. The moment their demands are accepted, the next moment they would come forward with another list of demands, with some fresh demands super-added to the old demands. Accept them, and then you will have to move in a never-ending circle of demands and demands. The surrender-policy will never be appreciated in a chivalrous manner by the most un-chivalrous communalists.

What is to be done then? The surest way of killing all communalism is to give an emphatic 'no' to the communal demands of all the communities. Reject them in toto, without showing the least leniency to them. It is a grievous mistake to think that the security and existence of the Muslims or other minor communities in India rest on fulfilment of the demands formulated by a section of their community who are more out to exploit the situation for their own purpose than for the benefit of the community. At one time the Lucknow-Pact was regarded as the guarantee of safeguard of the Muslim interest, then were concocted the 'Cursed Fourteen Points' of Mr. Jinnah, without which the Muslims (the Jinnites preached) cannot breathe in peace, and they will be thrown to the rapacious paws of the Hindus,—all the time the progress of the Muslims without these demands, are going on in marvellous rapidity.

The total breakdown of the Unity Conference has proved beyond doubt that the Surrender-Policy can never solve the Communal Problem. We hope, it will not be audacity on our part to tell a few salient facts to our leaders, which they have totally ignored. To try to solve the problem at any cost is a great mistake attended with unmitigated evils. The fundamental mistake of our leaders lies in their very attempt to solve the communal problem at any cost. At any cost it should never be solved. Rather let there be a permanent whining of the communalists, than in our readiness to appease them, we should adopt a course which would go against the best interest of the country. Before approaching the communalists for the solution of the communal problem, the national leaders ought to set before them a consistent

and clear ideal of Nationalism from which they would never shrink under any circumstances.

The proposition that the minorities only know what is best to them, is wholly erroneous and has arisen out of misconception as to what is the real and the legitimate interest of the country and community concerned. The majorities have as much right and duty to think of the minorities as the latter for themselves. Therefore without looking to the crocodile-tears of a handful of communalist leaders, the nationalist leaders ought to place before them an ideal, to which they would stick fast and brave all opposition from any quarter. Because, to come down from the lofty pedestal of nationalism to pander to the tastes of the communalist, is simply to sacrifice the better and greater interest of the country, to commit a political suicide. Therefore the idea of solution of communal problem at any cost should be abandoned immediately. As we do believe, that a day would soon come when the ice-berg of communalism would soon be melted into nothing by the warmth of freedom. Communalism should be left to itself severely alone. Left to itself it will die a natural death. Such things best flourish in a country which is dominated by a foreign power—but once freedom has come, no trace of them will be visible any more and any where.

It is a matter of great regret that while our leaders are exhibiting admirable skill and undaunted spirit in frustrating and checkmating the attempts of the bureaucracy in very many matters, they are showing little firmness and statesmanship in tackling communal problem. The way the leaders have adopted to tackle the problem, is unworthy of a national leader in whose heart the idea

of the country and the nation is reigning supreme. In their readiness to solve the communal problem, some of them have become ready to yield to each of the demands of the communalists, without taking from them the least assurance that they would prove friendly to the cause of the country and would not, as they have hitherto done, go against the best interest of the country. The inevitable consequence of such surrender is that communalism would get a fresh lease of life and the cause of nationalism would go by default.

We do believe that at this time of national crisis, there is no unreason on the part of the minorities to expect from the majority an unparalleled exhibition of a gesture of sacrifice to soothe them and allay their suspicion. But the demands of a group of Muslims as formulated in the 'Fourteen Points' are quite a different thing in as much as they are an open challenge to democracy, nationalism and all that is good and beneficial to the cause of the country. We can accept the demands of the minorities on the clear understanding to kill communalism, but we cannot accept a single item of the demands of the communalists which would perpetuate communalism, which would prove a stumbling block to the path of India's free growth as a self-governing and united Nation. It is the fond hope of the Congress and the Nationalists, to weld India into a single homogeneous nation, out of a heterogeneous mass of elements. But the "Fourteen Points" of Mr. Jinnah are framed with the express purpose of perpetuating communalism. Hence any leniency towards them, a slight concession to them is nothing but the abandonment of the ideals of the Congress, for which the Congress is passing

through a fiery ordeal. We are therefore of opinion that no demands of the communalists which are not based on national line will be accepted by the nationalists, Hindus and Muslims,—in no way should the nationalist leaders concede to the communal demands of which the manifest aim is to perpetuate communalism in the country.

The greatest danger of conceding to these demands is that it prevents the growth of nationalism. If for the surrender-policy of the leaders that a systematic, consistent and national policy could not have been possible—if at every threat of the communalists the Congress has to change its ideals, then the country would not be trained in any strong national policy—a policy to which man would stick under weal and woe. The Congress should stand by its national ideal, which it should never waive and would rather die by it than abandon it for the sake of supposed unity. It would be suicidal to bring the communalists under the same platform, while their mind is infected with the virus of communalism. Just as there can be no compromise between the ideals of the Congress and those of the bureaucracy, so also there can be no compromise between communalism and nationalism. Total denial and a deaf ear to the demands of the communalists is the only way of killing communalism—there is no other alternative. We ardently hope that the leaders of the country will be benefitted by the lesson of experience of the past and would stand unflinchingly by national ideals, never yielding to the momentary gust of the wind. They must always bear in mind that a concession to communalism is a death-blow to nation and country and therefore to

community. National first, National second, National always should be the ideal of every Indian Hindu and Muslim and others in these days of national crisis ; and without this ideal communal problem can never be solved.

HAS GANDHISM FAILED ?

Now that the Congress has withdrawn the Civil disobedience movement, has lifted the ban on council-entry, is meditating over the question whether it should accept office and that, on account of this non-committal attitude of the Congress a perceptible rift has been made in the lute,—a question naturally arises in the mind of the people, has Gandhism failed? After many fiery ordeals did Gandhism bear no fruit?

A hundred and twenty years ago, an almost similar question arose in the minds of the Europeans—"Has French Revolution failed?"—when Napoleon was crushed on the field of Waterloo, when the allied victorious powers triumphantly entered Paris, abolished the Republic, placed the Bourbons on the vacant throne and crumbled to dust all hopes of democracy and self-determination?

In both the cases the answer is an emphatic "No." The French Revolution did not die, it can not die. The forces let loose by the French Revolution are potent even to this day and are working out, directly and indirectly, visibly and invisibly, the destinies of the nations of the world to-day. Similarly Gandhism has not failed, it can not fail,—it is a powerful force, a life-giving and soul-nourishing energy,—it is a spirit of restlessness which leaves nothing unsearched, nothing untried to find its destined goal,—it is a Revolution and Evolution in one, it is politics, economics, sociology, ethics in one,—it is

materialism and spiritualism in one and the same thing at the same time. Nay more, it is all these things and yet it is something more which is still in the making.

For what ideals and principles does Gandhism stand?—and how has it achieved success? The following lines are but feeble attempts to give an answer to this question. Gandhism stands for complete emancipation of the country from all sorts of bondages—political, social, and economic,—visibly and invisibly, directly and indirectly it has influenced and is influencing and will continue to influence every sphere of the life of the Indians for many generations to come. It embodies in itself all the noble ideas of chivalry and bravery. Gandhism has created a history of its own,—a history that will be handled to the future generations as unique and novel of its kind. In the long roll of the history of the liberation of the enslaved people, the future generation will learn with pleasure and pride that, here in India, was invented a novel method of regaining the lost liberty of country—a surer, nobler and purer than any that was invented in anywhere in the world. Here you will hear no clanging of arms, no piercing shrieks of an agonised victim and yet there was a struggle, a war that was conducted with most peaceful and humane means. And if there were any arm, ammunition, and other paraphernalia of warfare these were on the other side that was out to crush the new method that Gandhism came to preach.

The struggle for constitutional reforms that was being conducted in the pre-Gandhian period was nothing but a timid and feeble attempt of some arm-chair politicians to lay before the feet of the rulers an appeal, a request,

a petition, to throw in some grains of mercy upon the helpless lot of the people of the country. When such request and prayer could not melt the heart of the rulers, political leaders of the pre-Gandhian period did not know, or could not conceive of any other method to regain from the authorities even some vestige of substantial power for the country. All their good intentions were thus frustrated by the noxious principle of "Thus far and no further." Relying on the absolute discretion of the authorities, such leaders advised their countrymen to wait in patience and silence for the coming Millennium which, they hope, would come spontaneously by a process of gradual evolution of whatever the authorities would condescend to concede to India.

It was just at that time,—just at a time when the political atmosphere of the country was gloomy and morbid,—when the people of the country were forced into a state of drowsiness and cowardice,—when life itself became almost dead and soulless and spiritless—when people could not believe that they might do something worth great,—when they could not dare to utter publicly such inoffensive words as "Swaraj," "Freedom". "Liberty,"—it was at time that a new gospel of hope and life, regeneration and salvation was placed before them in bold outlines, by a lean, thin man with no other dress than a loin-cloth to cover him,— and lo! at once the whole atmosphere became clear and fresh, the whole nation woke up from the age-long torpor and lethargy.

To be precise, Gandhism has brought upon India a consciousness of its national greatness and awoke in the minds of individual Indians a feeling of their own power, as such they began to feel their own importance and the

greatness of their mission for which no sacrifice is beneath their dignity. They also became conscious of every fibre of their strength. Gandhism taught the people that liberation of their country cannot be a gift from others,—it is not a godsend, not a boon to be thrust upon others by a third party ;—it is something which is to be achieved and acquired by individual endeavour, exertion and greatness. Let the Indians nay, every nation in the world, have this spirit of self-reliance and confidence inculcated in their mind, and the task of their liberation will be made easier and lighter.

With a view to infuse into the minds of the degenerate people, the spirit of nobleness, magnanimity and supreme sacrifice so that they may regain what was their own as a matter of right, so that they may shake off their indolence and do faithfully and dispassionately what was their duty—the novel method of "Satyagraha" was prescribed for such people, and the magic-wand of "Satyagraha" gave to the somlonent of the country from one end to the other, a very good shaking up. Non-Co-operation is nothing but the active realisation of "Passive Satyagraha." The principle of "do good to others" is not alone and by itself a perfect method, it should be supplemented by another equally sound and practical principle—"do not submit to evil, resist it with all your might." Both these ideals which make up a perfect and complete code of moral law, have found their full realisation in Non-co-operation method. This is the fundamental principle of Gandhism and whoever will accept this method as ideals of his life, will command

esteem and respect of the world and he is bound to achieve success in everything which he attempts.

But you will say, Non-co-operation is a failure, it did not or could not bring Swaraj, it could not close down schools and colleges which are instrumental for the slave mentality of the nation, etc. etc. If these be the signs of failure—then we admit defeat. But this is seeing a thing very superficially. Dive deep into the matter and you will realise that neither Non-co-operation, nor Civil Disobedience movement is a total failure,—it has far-reaching consequences on the life of the entire nation in the way of their making and shaping.

This mighty upheaval, this tremendous uprising of the benumbed people of India which Gandhism has brought forth in the country is a thing unforeseen and unprecedented in the history of India. And this uprising of the people can in more than one way, be compared with that historic French Revolution. To a people brought up under an alien system of government, Gandhism is a forceful message of hope and life. Like the French Revolution it has not only its political aspect, it has also affected the social, economic and moral life of the people. But the French Revolution has no counter part of another aspect of which Gandhism alone can boast,—that softening, ennobling and spiritualising influence which Gandhism has been able to infuse in the minds of the people. It is this aspect which has differentiated it from any other political movement. Gandhism is not a rebellion culminating in regicide, murder and plunder,—it is Revolution, sudden and dynamic indeed, but peaceful, non-violent, bloodless and

yet sure and more effective. And its permanent fruits are clearly perceptible in every walk of Indian life.

When we see the teeming millions of school children and college boys, these future hopes of our country—walking triumphantly—full of palpitating life—their breast erect, their every nerve quivering with sensation, throbbing with life and hope and joy, their spirit undaunted and unplugged and their energetic hand ready to undertake any difficult task—who were but two decades ago nothing but a desperate mass of lifeless corpse,—we cannot be blind to the elevating and pervading influence of Gandhism. And where were those masses,—those dumb driven masses,—those loathsome depressed classes,—those hewers of wood and drawers of water? Neglected and uncared for they were passing their tedious and cheerless days in bondage, in poverty and in ignorance,—and Gandhism by dint of its humanising influence, has brought those people before the forefront of the political movement so that their due share may not be robbed by any usurper—so that they may wake up and demand what is their legitimate share. This all-round mass movement which is fastly drifting towards socialistic ideals and tendencies,—this tremendous organisation of Labour, this sober movement for the emancipation of women which is pulling down the hitherto impregnable walls of the harems,—, and is bringing forth the womenfolk of the country into the field of activity,—these and sundry other things with them, are the direct outcome of Gandhism. Gandhism has set the ball rolling and it will be rolling on and on until the goal is attained. Gandhism is one of those few movements which are productive of all good and no evil, and in this Gandhism

partakes of the nature of religious and ethical revolution of a country.

Satyagraha, Non-co-operation or Civil Disobedience—are one or other aspects of Gandhism—but 'Realisation' is the quintessence of Gandhism. In failure it does not tumble or tremble down, in success it does not indulge in excesses. Repression cannot kill it, defeat cannot humble it,—it bears success or failure with perfect equanimity. Let the Indians of all parties and communities be imbued with the true spirit of Gandhism, and India is then destined to be great and noble, prosperous and flourishing and before long she will be one of the self-governing countries in the world.

KILL COMMUNALISM

The piteous appeal made by Dr. Alam, a few days ago, will, we hope send a thrill of sensation throughout the length and breadth of the country. It is an appeal made by a man who is a tired nationalist, and who has devoted the greater portion of his life to the cause of the country and humanity. Years of experience have taught the learned doctor the bitter lesson what immense harm and unmitigated injury, Communalism could have wrought upon the country—the country which was enjoying comparative peace and happiness all these years. The peaceful inhabitants of the country have witnessed with great horror the almost inhuman fratricidal war, arson, loot, slaughter, havoc,—one brother cutting the throat of another, killing the innocent passers-by, plundering the shops and houses, and spreading terror and havoc everywhere—and all these things for the petty cause of “stopping music before the mosque or the killing of a cow”—as if these are more favourable to God than the precious lives of human beings.

Attempts were made in the past and are being made in the present, to solve the knotty problem which is generally known by the name of ‘Communal Problem,’ but no tangible result has yet been achieved, and it seems that there is no prospect of its solution in near future. So the question of questions is, what to be done then? Will all the energies of the people be directed to this problem and all other problems will be side-tracked? Will all those leaders who are undergoing incarceration

and humiliation, suspend their activities, lay aside all the vital problems and would handle an insignificant problem upon the solution of which neither the prosperity of the country, nor its development depends in any manner and any shape? Anyone who has a grain of love for his country, will not hesitate to ascertain his duty under such circumstances. Everywhere in the world's history we find that when the destiny of the nation is on the stake, when some unforeseen calamity envelops a nation, all the petty interests of the individuals are merged in the higher interests of the nation or the country—then each individual forgets his self—all form themselves into one nation, one community—all are guided by one ideal, one motive, which is to emancipate the country from all bondages and thraldoms, to ward off the common danger which is, like the sword of Damocles, impending on the entire nation. But unfortunately, such things could not have been possible in India. In the wide range of world's history, perhaps India is the only exception, where things circumstantial are magnified and things essential are minimised and sidetracked. Otherwise how could it be possible that such paltry things as the distribution of seats and services between different communities would crop up at every moment and mar all prospects of constitutional advancement? It is indeed strange that in a country where the irresponsible executive with its extraordinary powers can do and undo anything, where the brutal system of imprisonment without trial still exists, where the chosen representatives of the people have no power to prove into the mysteries of the Secretariat—have no control over popular finance and army,—the questions of seats and services would engross the attention of the leaders and

the vital constitutional problems will be regarded as things of secondary importance !

The most important question to consider in this connection is, is there any such thing in India as the Communal Problem or the Problem of the Minorities? We make bold to state that there exists no such thing in this country. The problem of the minorities in India is different from that of other countries of the world. The minority and the majority communities of India have been placed in the most happy position. Held together by natural bonds of love, affection, friendship and fellow-feeling the Hindus and the Muslims of India are living in this country in perfect peace, amity and good-will, from generation to generation. We hear from our octogenarian fathers that thirty years ago there was no such thing as the communal problem. Not that there was no quarrel between the Hindus and Muslims, often there was bitter quarrel, but the nature of the quarrel was different from what it is to-day. To speak the truth, the generian fathers that thirty years ago there was no such a communal one. No leader did then foment and foster the quarrel by any underhand means, rather they tried to check it whenever the first symptom of such quarrel was perceptible. But in these days we find horrible spectacle in that those who foster and foment the communal quarrel and can turn it into a riot, are acclaimed as the true leaders of the communities concerned, otherwise the high priests of the communalists could not have been given prominence and could not have secured seats in the Round Table Conferences. Our limited space will not allow us to discuss the much-debated question of how the petty quarrel between the Hindus and Muslims, was

“magnified” into a communal riot, but one thing the readers must bear in mind that, inspite of the differences of religion, culture and custom, the relation between the Hindus and the Muslims was always as cordial and natural as does exist between two sons of the same parents. And as one brother often quarrels with another for such petty things, as a plot of land, a bush of bamboo or a fish of a pond, so there were quarrels between the Hindus and the Muslims for very many petty things, but strange to say, that in such quarrels many times it happened that a Hindu joined with a Muslim against another Hindu for no ulterior motive but to redress the wrongs of his Muslim brother, and similar thing did a Muslim to remove the grievance of his Hindu brother. In numerous litigations in the villages still such things do happen. Hence, formerly the quarrel between the Hindus and the Muslims did never assume the hideous appearance of a communal quarrel, rather it was of a purely domestic nature and like all domestic quarrels, it very soon subsided and left no wound in the heart and the little bickering that took place due to the inherent weakness of human nature, was soon cemented by brotherly love and affection.

As regards the grievance of one against another, we must say, that there was never any organised agitation to rake up a forgotten or half-forgotten cause (“right” they call it now) and never was such a grievance utilised to embitter the fraternity of relations between the Hindus and the Muslims. And the grievances that existed then were never of a communal nature, rather the grievances were of such a nature as never made it impossible to unite the two communities into one entity, to remove the

difficulties of another. Even to-day when the whole atmosphere is surcharged with communal feeling, we find little traces of such bitter feelings in remote villages, the glory and pride of the country. And why?

Here, we do not wish to drag down politics in a matter which is purely of a social and domestic character, because we regard "Hindu-Muslim Problem" as a domestic one. But due to a succession of some unfortunate events, the communal problem has now become a political one. In proportion as the political problem becomes acute and desperate, the communal problem assumes a dangerous shape, and riots, arson and manslaughter follow suit. As we shall avoid politics, we shall not enter deep into the question. But these things are facts for the discovery of which no ingenuity is necessary. Our contention is that there is no such thing as communal problem in India, and the problem which is labelled as the communal one, has its birth in politics and will find its grave with the dawn of independence. In every country it is found that at the time of freedom movement various undesirable problems crop up under various names which are the inevitable consequences of the ages of subjection to a foreign power and which put immense difficulties on the path of freedom. The communal problem of India is of this nature. It is not due to any deep-rooted differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. It is the duty of every patriot and every lover of the country to wink at the differences that exist between the two communities—a larger and broader outlook will make up all the differences. What is most needed at this juncture is a policy, which Cromwell would have called "thorough",—a policy which would

ride rough-shod over the thorny ground of communalism. We believe the communal problem to be one of those unhappy incidents which are being raised not to redress the grievances of the minorities, but to put impediments on the path of freedom. These difficulties and obstacles must have to be got over by a method different from those that are being suggested in the various unity conferences, pacts and secret arrangements.

We sincerely welcome the laudable move taken by Dr. Alam in combating communalism. We ardently hope that the people of the country will take up the cue from him and organise everywhere clubs and associations and begin work with the avowed aim of killing communalism. Communalism should no longer be tolerated under any shape and strenuous effort must be made to eradicate the evil root and branch from the country. Two things are necessary—an unbiased heart and undaunted patriotism. He who will organise 'Anti-communal Leagues' must have to shun all communal prejudices, jealousies and biases and must have also to sever all connection from every communal organisation. To him there would be no difference between the Hindus and the Muslims. He is for all and of all his first object of consideration will be the peace, security and upliftment of the country and then anything else. We appeal to the people of the country and specially to younger generations to rise equal to the occasion, and organise themselves in such a way as would leave no loophole through which the canker of communalism might get an entrance into the Indian body politic. Communalism is a disgrace to any self-respecting person and as such it must have to be done away with before it is too late.

COMMUNAL RIOT

The last trace of pre-historic barbarism, that still lingers among the people of India, is the communal riot that breaks out throughout the length and breadth of the country—a thing which no broadening of outlook, no enlightenment of heart, no advancement of Science, culture and education, no illumination of the mind by higher and better conception of moral and religious ideas, —could drive out from the minds of the religion-mad people of the country, not excepting those who boast of the universality of their religion and who give to the world a scientific and rational explanation of their religion. "Religion! what treasure untold resides in that heavenly word"—so says Cowper in the mouth of Alexander Selkirk when he was driven adrift in an uninhabited island. But to us, the poor mortals of India, the Hindus and Muslims of India—what does the word religion mean? A Hindu will at once produce before you some memorable sayings of Ramkrishna or Swami Vivekananda and others and will boldly say this is true religion. So also will a Muslim place before you some imperishable sayings from the Quran and Hadis and will say that this is true religion and similarly every other men will do the same and will claim that his religion is the best one in the world. Their manner of expression is undeniable and you cannot but accept it as the true interpretation of their religion. The practice and profession of the people are at so great a variance, so inconsistent

to each other that religion at present means nothing more nor less than the punctilious observance of some soulless formalities and practices, some ceremonious and monotonous twistings and contortions of body, which have become essential and unalterable part of the religion of the people, more for their hallowed antiquity than for any inherent merit infused in them by the founders of the religions. That this is so—that religion has become an engine of oppression and tyranny, an instrument of self-aggrandisement is clearly shown in the frequent breaking out of communal riot through the length and breadth of the country.

Among many of the fundamental and essential teachings that a true and perfect religion professes to inculcate in the mind of its adherents, is the duty to God—their creator together with the duty to humanity, the most favoured being of the creator—a being made after the image of God. But these two duties of man are set forth in such clear and well-defined manner that one does not, under any circumstances clash with the other—rather one is complement to the other, one is fulfilled by the other, nay even more, one is identical with the other. Man's duty to his creator, is null and void unless it is perfected by fulfilling his duty towards his fellow-brethren.

But the greatest tragedy in the history of religion is that the general mass of men, in their fear and awe of God, in their readiness to catch a glimpse of the beatific vision of God, do very often forget and neglect their other duty—their duty towards humanity and fellow-brethren. They bow down before God, they adore Him, love Him above everything in the world, but take

no notice of weeping humanity at large, the favoured being of God. They adore and glorify God, but ignore and trample under feet His dying creature, whose wailings and groanings tend to tremble the very throne of the Almighty Father.

The failure of religion-mad people of the world to realise this eternal and basic principle of religion, leads to anarchy and confusion scepticism and fanaticism which culminate in riot, and affray, arson and bloodshed and all sorts of barbarism that obtained in the society of the primitive world.

The communal riot that breaks out in India in season and out of season, has its origin in that wrong conception of religion which misguides a devotee from the true path of virtue, love and morality. Whether in India or elsewhere very few people are free from this delusion—a delusion which so blurs their vision that they cannot distinguish right from wrong, godly from ungodly. Religion is after all a matter of conscience and fullest liberty must be given to anyone who wishes to obey the dictates of his conscience. But the real tragedy lies where a pious devotee will not rest content by achieving for himself the liberty to follow a religion, a cult after his own liking nay, even more he will go a step further and shall attempt to put a ban upon those who will refuse to follow in his track and shall demand the same liberty to select a religion for the benefit of his own soul after his own liking. Here lies the true genesis of communal riot—here lies the real mystery that baffles all attempts of the prophets and saints to establish peace and security among mankind professing different religions.

When a man adopts a religion or becomes conscious that he has a religion which appears to him to be the best one in the world, he thinks that he is at once severed and separated from the rest of mankind,—he is now a new man and he feels himself superior to any other man, as the paradise is now open to him alone and not to others. Above every other being in the world, the God of Universe will save him alone and place him by His own side. The horrible conclusion that this fanatical love of religion leads to, is that a pious devotee thinks that he has no duty to, and nothing to do for, those who happen to differ from him in matters of religion, in matters touching the soul of a man. Unless a man will save his soul by following a particular religion, he will not have any protection from God of Universe, and from the favoured being of such God. Because a man fails to adopt a particular religion, the pious devotee shall not have any duty towards him. When he will go to hell after his death, why he shall be exempted from the torture in this world too? And hence, the greater obstacle will be put in the way of false religion, the easier will it be for him to please his God. Therefore the followers of one religion take delight in opposing, oppressing and persecuting the followers of another religion. Communal riots, religious intolerance and various other quarrels and dissensions that arise in the name of religion originate in this way—in this way the followers of one religion take the plea of pleasing their God by killing and exterminating the followers of other religion.

The vital cause of communal riot that often and anon breaks out unawares, and disturbs the peace of the

country and embitters the friendly feelings of the different communities of India, is not the question of music before mosque or the killing of a cow—it is their spirit of intolerance, this wrong conception of religion, this foolish doctrine of pleasing God while ignoring His creatures,—that predominates in the minds of the fanatics of all communities. Islam will never be in danger, the throne of “Rabbul Alemin” (Lord of the world) will not be uprooted if the Muslims allow the Hindus or others to lead a procession with music before the mosque, nor will the whole foundation of Islam topple down if the Muslims having due regard to the sentiments of the Hindus agree to discontinue the practice of cow-killing. Similarly Hinduism will not be annihilated from the face of the world and the gods and goddesses of the Hindus will not be humiliated and humbled down if the Hindus having due regard to the sentiments of the Muslims agree to abandon the exercise of their right to lead a procession with music before the mosque of the Muslims or agree to allow the latter to kill a cow. But the thing predominating among the Hindus and the Muslims is the demon of intolerance, fanaticism, bigotry, prejudice and superstition of the vilest type. Hence they will not let things go in peace, concord and amity—they will kill one another’s throat, pull down mosques and temples, burn to ashes corn-fields and homesteads and like some barbaric hordes of olden days, will strike terror and havoc in the minds of “Mlechhs” or “Kafirs” and all those only to please their God. What a melancholy confusion of the duty to God and to man! What a dismal tragedy when re-union with God is the cherished ideals of all religions! what a fretful end where peace,

happiness, joy and love was the Summum Bonum of existence.

We ask in amazement and bewilderment, is a temple, or a mosque or a cow, more sacred, more divinely than the life of a human being that man should be butchered and slaughtered for the honour of those insignificant things? The ancient savages and barbarians washed the altar of their God with human blood ; if the same thing be allowed to be done by the advocates of rational religions then where lies the difference between barbarism and civilization, fanaticism and rationalism, iconoclasm and toleration? The rioters and their supporters behave like a barbarian and still they are not ashamed to claim that reason and philosophy are on their side. Their reason is gone ; their philosophy is gone ; they are relapsed into the olden days of savagery and barbarism, with this difference that the ardour and sincerity of the ancient are replaced by diplomacy, hypocrisy and an insincere motive to make a big capital out of a matter which concerns God and religion.

It is often seen that the stage and the press is utilised to foment the communal riot to embitter the friendly feeling between the different communities, rather than to lessen the seriousness and gravity of the situation when acrimony and jealousy hold the minds of the people. If the duty of the press and stage is to mould the destiny of the nation, to form the character of the people, they should discourage the rioters, should denounce them and should not rake up the forgotten things from the limbo of oblivion and present these things before them in glaring headlines, so that the common people may be excited to action.

Heavy responsibility rests on those who want to liberate their country from the thralldom of superstitions, prejudices—the cursed enemy of all religions. Political and religious leaders should exercise in their minds a higher and better sense of religion and morality, to remove from their minds the erroneous belief that service of God is distinct and different from the service of man. The first essential thing is to inculcate in their minds, a spirit of toleration and liberality towards others. Let them learn the essential teachings of religion that God is not best served by killing men, but by loving His creatures. Let ten thousand mosques and temples be demolished to the ground than a slight harm be done to the creatures of God—let the chantings of sacred verses and hymns be stopped for a moment, or even for ever, than oppression and torture suffocate the voices of humanity—stifle conscience of man, the most favoured being of God. No harm will be done to the God of humanity—no throne of that Benign God will be uprooted, no dishonour and humiliation will be occasioned by it. Rather the Almighty God of the Universe will have the inner satisfaction to see that at last after centuries of quarrels, bickerings, bloodshed and warfare His men are living in peace, amity, friendship and opulence. From Heaven above He will shower benediction to the children of Adam who would at last unite together under His Godhood as members of one common family! Amen.

SERVICES AND THE MUSLIMS

Being a Mussalman and also a nationalist of the radical type, it has become very difficult for me to give a candid and unbiased judgment over the melancholy incident that took place the other day at the meeting of the Calcutta Corporation. A Muslim as I am, it is nothing but unfaithfulness on my part not to sympathise with a young Muslim who just comes out in the field, after completing a successful career in the University, and is found loitering here and there for a petty job carrying a salary of Rs. 30 or 40 per month, which will be a godsend to him. The case of some of these young Muslims is so desperate that perhaps some day I might have to hear that they have committed suicide after a fruitless search for any post under the sun. My heart-felt sympathy goes to these hopeless and helpless Muslim youths. But on my second thought I cannot ignore the other facts which also demand the keen attention of a humanitarian. As a nationalist, it would be unpatriotic on my part not to sympathise with those non-Muslims who share the same fate with the unfortunate Muslim youths. If the Muslim leaders, out of due regard for the needs and requirements of the Muslim youths, demand that certain posts should be fixed for them, what inhumanity and injustice will be committed by the non-Muslim leaders, if they out of the same regard to the needs and requirements of their communities persistently refuse to accede to the demands of the Muslims? I shall be guilty of treason and indulg-

ing in anti-national ideals if I do not be in one accord with those non-Muslims, specially the Hindus, who want a national solution of the problem of services. Therefore, as a nationalist, I welcome the attitude of those Hindus who are kicking at the communal demands of the Muslims.

My gentle readers will laugh at me, and some perhaps will smite upon me at this my seeming inconsistency. "How would you reconcile communalism and nationalism in showing sympathy both with the Hindus and the Muslims? Can these two things exist in one person?"—They would ask me in bewilderment. To them my reply is: no, my friend, no, these cannot exist in the same ideal.—Communalism and nationalism can never be reconciled, others may try, but as for myself I shall shudder at such ideas and shall spurn at them. In politics, as in other matters, I belong to that group of people who always hold radical views. I hate separate electorate, the unholy Award, and all those things that smack of communalism. In all these things, my idea is to cut at the root at one stroke by replacing joint free election. It is impossible that a person holding such views would attempt to reconcile communalism and nationalism. I shall always uphold the ideal of nationalism against any temptation that may be offered to the Muslims. But still I believe that there is a way out of this tangle that is baffling our worthy city-fathers.

Sympathy, love and fellow-feeling—these are the things that are of essential requisite at this hour when we are to deal with the communal problem. A true nationalist, be he a Hindu or a Muslim, should not be guided by any communal consideration. In his eyes,

Hindus or Muslims, or other Indian communities are equal, their grievances should equally engross his attention, he should deal with their problems like an impartial judge. And hence there should not be any question of giving preference to one community over against the other. Come along with me, and I shall show my Hindu friends, hundreds of Muslim youths—I.A.'s and B.A.'s and even M.A.'s—who are aimlessly seeking here and there for a suitable job for their maintenance—and sometimes for the maintenance of their wives, children, aged fathers, mothers and other dependents—and I shall then ask you, will you not shed tears for their miserable lot?—and will you not throw in some grains of mercy upon them? Similarly I shall show my Muslim friends, larger number of Hindus of equal capacity and in some cases of greater capacity who are repeating the same thing and I will ask the Muslims, will you not show as much sympathy for them as you expect from the Hindus—and will you not do all that you can for them? When you, Hindus and Muslims, see these unhappy things on the very road on which you daily stroll, does your humanity allow you to make any preference between the two sets of people? If you have not sufficient amount of strength, help the man whose grievances require urgent redress without considering his community. Why should you allow your elementary virtues, thus to be vitiated by petty communal consideration? Do justice to the wronged, have mercy for the needy.

Will you not find any way out of this confusion? Shall everything be allowed to go on in this haphazard and random way? If the leaders of both the communities sincerely wish the end of all these loathsome things,—

these foolish billingsgates, there are two workable and possible remedies for them,—one is to fix the percentage of the communities concerned for all posts under the authority,—and the other is to fill every posts by competitive examination, no matter whoever gets the posts. Here will again arise a difficulty—the Hindus will abhor at the idea of fixing the percentage and the Muslims will hate competition. To the objection of the Hindus—that the fixing of percentage will jeopardise efficiency what reply the Muslims have in their store? But the argument of the communally-minded Muslims is queer almost like 'argumentum baculinum'. They will damn efficiency and competency, not to speak of competition. As the Government favours the Muslims why should not the Corporation lean towards them? But they forget that the Government favours them for some ulterior motive,—what motives are there on the part of the Hindus that they will do a thing which is against the principles of democracy? But I ask you, my Muslim leaders, why you are so much afraid of competitive examination? I think that if the Muslims accept the principle of competition, they will not be the losers in the long runs, but will be gainers in more than one way. Because if posts, whether under the Government or under the Corporation,—are filled by competitive examination, favouritism will be abolished and everywhere among the Muslims there will be re-awakening, and efficiency will be the standard which will ultimately prove beneficial to the millions of rate-payers and rural ryots, not excepting the Muslims.

None can deny that in most cases, among the Hindus and the Muslims, favouritism, nepotism and other under-hand means are taken recourse to to fill a post. If the

Muslims want to do away with all these evil practices, why are they levelling charges against the Hindus alone, leaving their leaders untouched by any such attack? Everybody knows that it is through malpractices alone that many responsible posts under the Sarkar are being captured by men of lesser merits, while men of real merit and worth are rotting in the market. Moulvi Fazlul Huq, and Khan Bahadur Abdul Momen are eye-witnesses to these things. The remedy of all these evils is competitive examination. Let competition be the standard of services and it will make an end of many filthy things.

Leaving aside harangues of our valiant leaders who are out to make a big capital out of the present impasse, the general mass of people should remember that the chief purposes of the services and seats either under the Government or under the Corporation, are not to give employment to some lucky people, but those have been created for the purpose of managing faithfully the affairs of the people. We who belong to the tagrag of the people, shall only see whether the persons entrusted to do our work, are faithfully doing their duties or not. Why should we make a hill out of a molehill? It matters little to us, whether one community get all the posts and services and totally eliminate the others from them. We should only see whether efficiency has been impaired or not. If efficiency is not impaired we shall not utter a word if the non-Muslims secure all the jobs, but if it is impaired we shall move heaven and earth, even if all the posts are held by members of our own community.

Now that the Corporation election is at hand, it is no wonder that the interested persons would prepare the field for their safe return. We fear that this is the motive

behind all these unseemly things. My advice to the community is: don't be hoodwinked by these ephemeral things. There are other methods through which you can redress your grievances. Beware of your false leaders. By exploiting you, the common people, they will serve their own purpose, but in time of your need, they will betray you and kick at you.

THE PROBLEM OF REPRESENTATION

We yield to none in our earnest desire to secure for the Muslims a larger number of seats than at present in the Provincial Legislatures where we form the majority. But in this our desire we have not been actuated by the noxious theory that the seats of the Legislatures should be allocated according to the population basis. Majority or no majority, any community living within the boundary of a province, ought to have the full right of capturing any number of seats he is capable of capturing, by dint of his ability, honesty, sincerity, public service, political experience and in proportion to the amount of confidence reposed in him by the communities other than that to which the candidates belong.

Those who regard education, intelligence and political experience as merely accidental qualities, and the majority of population as essential ingredient for eligibility, do not know even the first principles of political science. If this principle be the basis of representation in the Legislatures, then there cannot be any good Government in the country, specially in the transitional period when vigorous action is necessary to evolve a full-fledged constitution out of a phantom shadow. The best thing would be then to elect to the Legislature the choicest men from among the various communities. As there is no "Test Act" and "Corporation Act" in India, no community ought to grudge if men of his persuasion are not elected. It is sufficient that each member of

every community in India should have the full right, uninterrupted by any law, to participate in all election. There is nothing to fear, nothing to repent if in this joint free election no candidate of one particular community is elected, no harm can possibly be done to that community, as any such attempt will be regarded as "ultra vires" by the rules of the constitution. It is unthinkable that the elected members of one community by reason of its capturing majority of seats will make an organised attempt to crush the other communities. Because, the interest of one community is never wholly unconnected with the interest of the other. If any attempt is made by the Hindus to do harm to the Muslims, then it will also tell heavily upon the Hindus. Similarly such an attempt of the Musalmans will heavily tell upon the Muslims. Therefore the Hindus and the Muslims will always try to be free from any thought of doing harm to the other. Therefore, the first duty of every right-thinking Muslim and Hindu, would be to try to elect such men as, professing one faith or the other, would belong to the community, but would stand forth as the vanguard of the liberties of the people as the true representatives of the country. Such men would represent neither the Hindus, nor the Muslims, would never allow their courageous hearts, noble spirit and wide outlook to be superseded by selfishness, narrowness, bigotry and hypocrisy.

If the dictum that "perpetual vigilance is the price of liberty" be applicable in the case of England, there is no reason why that should not be applied in India

too. It is certain that the British Government are going to yield some power to the Indians in near future. But before transferring any power to us, the Bureaucracy will administer certain reactionary spirit in the body-politic which will prevent it from being evolved into a full-fledged independent constitution worthy of name. But that spirit must have to be neutralised by the perpetual vigilance of the people.

The greatest menace to the future constitution is the administration of the poison of communalism in the body-politic which the reactionaries will gladly inject therein to counteract the sincere patriotism of the people. If the legislature is represented on communal line and not on national line, then the first object of consideration will be neglected, the common welfare of the country will be postponed and the different communities will fall out against one another. Therefore, the first thing to be done is to see, not the special interests of each community, but the safety of the constitution from any interference from outside. When different communities will go there through separate electorate, with the object of seeking their own interest, then they will invariably fail to ward off the common danger that will befall the country.

The most perplexing of all the problems about communal representation is the demands of the minorities like some Moslems, Europeans and Anglo-Indians, to have the right to return their men through separate electorate. There may be some justifications in the demands of the minorities to have a fixed number of men in the Legislature, but there is not even least shadow of justice and political expediency in their demand that

such men should be elected by them alone through separate electorate. Whatever differences there may be between a community and a community, however inimical one may be towards the other, all differences and enmities must have to be shunned as soon as a man enters the Legislature. When the Cabinet will be formed from amongst the elected members, each of its member will take charge of the portfolio of different subjects such as Education, Agriculture, Local Self-Government etc. which will concern the whole nation. A member of the Cabinet is always presumed to be impartial and neutral and friendly towards all the communities alike. He will have to discharge his duties in such a way that there does not arise the least suspicion in the mind of others that he is supporting his own community. But if the members are elected by separate electorate and if the other communities have nothing to do with the election of such members, then how could such men be entrusted with the entire charge of an office where matters concerning others will be dealt with? How could they know the feelings and sentiments of those whose confidence they do not care to win? How could they know whether the particular measure they are going to introduce will be beneficial or detrimental to others? In the past we have had the bitter experience of sending such men through separate electorate, who thought, and acted in a manner that led us to think that they had no duty to other community except to their own community. But as the part is never isolated from the whole, so no member of one community can do anything for the part if he fails to do good to the whole. We remind the Muslim public of the reactionary move of some of our

members who voted for the Government when Criminal Law Amendment Bill was on the anvil, on the ground that the said Bill would not touch the Muslims. Feeling their position comparatively secure through separate electorate, if the Muslims think that they are not bound by any duty to oppose any measure which will be intended to crush the Hindus, how can they grudge at the action of the Hindu zemindars who did not support the Moslem amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Bill? These are the inevitable results of the separate electorate and undue and unreasonable safeguards for special interests.

It is a mistake to think that unless a Hindu or a Muslim go to the Council, his special interests will not be safeguarded. By abolishing separate electorate and introducing joint electorate, we want to change the whole outlook of the country in such a way that no one in the community will ever think of his interest alone. He will identify the interests of others with his own interest. We shall make others our friends, by compelling them to come to our door for securing our votes. "Special interests", "Islam in danger"! "Legitimate rights of the Muslims"!—These are the catchwords by which attempts are being made by interested parties to divide India into watertight compartments. But these divisions and subdivisions of our beloved mother-country into various parts will not help any community in any way, rather it will strengthen the hands of the alien rulers. The best solution of the problem of representation is the unconditional acceptance of joint electorate.

From the proceedings of the R. T. C. it is apparent that if the principle of joint electorate were accepted

then a solution would have been possible. But due to the insistence of the interested parties any solution became impossible, but with what result? With no profit to any community and no gain to India. Due to the foolishness of some of our Moslem leaders several special constituencies were created such as Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Landlords, Labour etc., which are more disadvantageous to the Muslims than the acceptance of the principle of joint free election. Had the Muslims joined with Mahatma Gandhi and then oppose all special constituencies, then it would have been better for the Moslems. But their insistence on self-aggrandisement necessitated the creation of too many groups which ultimately would ruin their own cause. Now they are denouncing special constituencies, but they are only reaping what they had sowed sometime back. But if the Muslims want the real benefit of their community, then let them realise the gravity of the situation, let them tear into pieces the "Minority Pact", let them stand side by side, shoulder to shoulder with those fellow-brothers of India, with whom they will have to live from generation to generation, and lastly let them make a united demand for the common weal of the country. Then no majority of the Muslims in the Councils will be guided by the Hindus and no Muslim will feel insecure if the Hindus with the votes of the Muslims, secure all the seats of the Council. It is in this way alone, that the problem of representation will be solved and the security of the minorities will be assured.

Mr. JINNAH AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE.

When Mr. Jinnah came back from England he became the "cynosure of neighbouring eyes"—the distracted and scattered forces of Islam in India began to look upon him as their leader and guide and were expecting, every moment, some memorable announcement or re-assuring message from him. And at the right moment came from him his scathing criticism of the White Paper scheme. Then, when everybody was in suspense as to what he would say about the Muslim Conference, he suddenly gave a home-thrust to the Aga-Khanites by his memorable pronouncement that he could not join issue with a party which gave unstinted support to the repressive legislations of the Government, he would rather re-organise the Muslim League with a new orientation of outlook and policy.

Mr. Jinnah's is not a new name in politics. In the arena of Indian politics Mr. Jinnah had taken a glorious part in the past, and his part had not been that of "a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more." We distinctly remember how in our school-going days we were inspired and invigorated by the fire-breathing speeches of Mr. Jinnah. In those days the political ideals of the Muslim League were almost identical with those of the Congress so much so that many people began to look upon the Congress and the League as the two sides of the same coin.

We need not relate here the shameful story of how the Muslim League gradually deviated from its ideals of

independence and how, instead of becoming an organisation for the advancement of Indian political ideals, it became a clique of reactionary parties bent on stemming the tide of rising nationalism in India. While the Congress began to march forward and forward from the ideal of Home Rule to that of Swaraj, the movement of the Muslim League, like the ghost of the Indian folk-tales was backward. Its ideals, therefore, receded backward and backward till it unknowingly fell into the abyss and quagmire of European diplomacy. And its veteran leaders finding no other means of escape made common cause with the school of Churchills and Villiers. It is in this snare that Mr. Jinnah will find the Muslim League entangled and enmeshed. We do not know whether Mr. Jinnah will enjoy with great relish the present political degeneration of the League or bewail its downfall, but we, to whom the League was once a source of inspiration, simply shed tears at its downfall.

Before the bar of the world Mr. Jinnah cannot plead "not guilty" if he is made responsible for the present degeneration of the Muslim League. When with the consultation, guidance and dictates of those of his erstwhile opponents in politics, he framed his famous Fourteen Points, he had little thought and as a shrewd politician he ought to have thought that the so-called guarantees of safeguard instead of protecting the Muslim interest will be an instrument of self-aggrandisement in the hands of the time-serving opportunists, will serve as a mask on the face of the hypocrites and will be a rallying point of 'jo-hookums' and 'apke-wastes' to subserve their own ends by exploiting the unawakened and the fanatical element of the community.

When the storm of the Khilafat agitation, which had driven the Leaguers to seek shelter in the pigeon-hole of the Secretariat Building, had subsided and the atmosphere of the country became calmer to allow them to come in the open, then it was that they took up the Fourteen Points as the 'sumum bonum' of their political ideals. Then began a ceaseless struggle, not for the emancipation of the country, not for the attainment of political power, not for the transfer of power from the ruler to the ruled, but for the incorporation of their Fourteen Points in the future constitution of India—the form of that constitution mattered little to them, be it slavery, drudgery, absolutism or despotism of the worst type.

Twelve years ago the Congress and the Muslim League were fighting side by side with the same aim in view with almost identical programme of works for the emancipation of the country. But oh! what a mighty transformation the League has undergone within these twelve years—the Congress is banned and outlawed for its advanced political ideals and the Muslim League is flourishing in the sunshine of official favour.

To make a long story short the Muslim League had long deviated from its political ideals, had lost its original character and complexion and had become at this state a mischievous organisation. It could denounce the Congress and the Congress ideals, but it does not show the same outspokenness to condemn the repressive laws of the bureaucracy, rather its veteran office-bearers had shamefully acquiesced in them. Many of its leaders never try to infuse life into the heart of the community, to engender in them a spirit of self-help and noble qualities that befit a worthy citizen.

When the Communal Award was announced it created a general satisfaction among the Muslims. From that time onward we were watching the movement of Mr. Jinnah and found him regaling the spoils of the Award with self-complacent attitude. As Mr. Jinnah had long become the spoilt child of his mother-country his foresight could not go so far as to comprehend the mischievous effects of the Award. He and his followers began to hatch programme as to how best they could appropriate the spoils of the future reform. But all his hopes were frustrated by the White Paper. Mr. Jinnah then openly denounced the White Paper, but he had not the courage to denounce the Award, neither has he that intensive perception to look through the evils which the Award is sure to foster.

We wonder that Mr. Jinnah could not still understand the fact that the retention of Separate Electorate means perpetual enthrallment to India. Like the Aga-Khanites Mr. Jinnah is not wedded to Separate Electorate. How is it then that he does not utter a word of protest against it? Is it because of the fact that he would then lose popularity with his followers? But is it the duty of the leader to be led by the Sansculottic element or the tagrag of the community—rather than to lead them to a destined goal by sweet reasonableness, calm advice and sound policy? How can he denounce the White Paper, which could be framed on those lines only on the reliance on the separate electorate, without contradicting himself? We may say that the White Paper scheme is the natural sequel of the faithless behaviour of the followers of Mr. Jinnah who were so enamoured of some unsubstantial seats

that to get them recorded in the Statute Book they did not hesitate to betray the cause of India at the eleventh hour and to make common cause with enemies of Indian nationalism to crush the legitimate aspiration and adult ambition of young India. Mr. Jinnah and his followers could not take the nationalist Muslims into their confidence by abandoning one point in the fourteen but the whole world knows how they have yielded to the enemies of India and Islam by surrendering the eternal jewels of their soul and took exultantly whatever was doled out to them. Such is the fate of all unprincipled men in the world. Let them enjoy the fruit of their follies. It is their fanaticism, their half-hearted policy that is mainly responsible for the White Paper scheme. It is too late to think of making any improvement upon it.

We do not know whether Mr. Jinnah has still realised the folly and mistake of his policy or whether he has been able to recover himself from the fatal hallucination which has possessed him so long. But this we must tell him clearly that if he is sincere in his motive, if he sincerely loves his country and community and if he sincerely desires the liberation of his country, he must have to change his policy and ideals which had done untold mischief to the country in the past and are keeping away the Muslims from the inspiring touch of advanced political ideals. Like a fond but foolish mother he is still hugging to his breast his beloved Fourteen Points, fully aware of all their imperfections and shortcomings. But it is the duty of the good mother not to remain blind to the iniquities and sins of her child, but to rectify his error. Past experience had shown Mr. Jinnah that there are many shortcomings in the Fourteen Points,

the greatest and the most mischievous of which is that their acceptance will never succeed in returning the right type of men to the legislature—the worst type of men with fanatical leaning and egoistical temperament will be made masters of the situation. How can he think of adjusting the relation between the different communities of India without abandoning some of the items in the Fourteen Points? First of all he must have to reject “in toto” the Fourteen Points, he must have to disabuse his mind of the last trace of communalism and then come forward with open mind and meet others in open Conferences to discuss the communal question. He does not belong to the tagrag section of the people; why should he then view the communal problem from one angle of vision only? Can he not rise above all littleness and pettiness and try to unite India under one banner embracing all the communities and present them with a synthetic solution of the communal problem? He must risk to abandon some of his stalwart followers, they are his followers only because his Fourteen Points suit their sinister motive, because taking shelter under them they can best thrive in the region where absolute sacrifice is necessary. His criticism of the White Paper has proved beyond doubt that a union of Jinnah with the Agha-Khanites is unnatural and even unholy. Let Mr. Jinnah seek his ally in politics elsewhere. The apparent unity with the Agha-Khanites is only the seamy side of the thing but the difference between them is so great that it can never be bridged. Why should he then spend up his energy in an unprofitable mission? Let the political issue be the only point, the fulcrum round which he will find united, all the Indians irrespective of caste and

reed standing steadfastly for the attainment of noble ideals.

We still hesitate to believe that Mr. Jinnah is a back number in politics. Even at this hour we expect many things from him and we hope that he will not belie our expectation. Unhappy India can ill afford to lose the services of Mr. Jinnah. He can still mobilise public opinion against the White Paper, do many things for the establishment of communal peace and harmony, can put life into the heart of his degenerate community. But alas! he is sailing for England in search of a Holy Grail, leaving behind him unhappy India to wail over her lot, leaving devastated Bihar to her own fortune and leaving his dear community to pine in poverty, ignorance, and superstition, he is seeking relief in luxuriant England. But still he assures us that he will fight there for India. Well done! Bravo! Could sophistry go further. Jinnah or no Jinnah India is destined to get her emancipation in the near future, but in the glorious pages of India's future history Mr. Jinnah's name will be placed among the deserters of her cause who, in spite of their ability, deserted her and betrayed her cause at the hour of her sorest need.

FROM A NATIONALIST TO A COMMUNALIST

If ever there was a leader who was weighed in the balance again and again and was always found wanting, it is Mr. Jinnah. Twenty years ago when he began his career as a politician, all attention was rivetted upon him. At that time his ability, his political education, his stalwart championship for the cause of constitutional reform, above all his love for his country—were all combined together to acclaim him as a competent leader of the rising generation. Whether in the Congress, or in the Muslim League or in various other public meetings, when he thundered eloquence and wisdom, it seemed to us as if some Mazzini or Robert Emmet had appeared among us to lead us to a path of glory and victory. No one had ever imagined that a life full of so many good beginnings, promises, hopes and aspirations would achieve nothing, but would rather degrade itself into a miserable and pitiable condition which is the common lot of toadies and sycophants. Well-a-day, that a glorious life with a still more glorious beginning would on its triumphant march towards a glorious goal lose its way in the waste and wilderness, which men of lesser merits could have easily passed over without the least stumble.

That Mr. Jinnah of to-day is a different man from what he was twenty years ago, will be evident from a short perusal of his career as a public man from the days of the Non-co-operation movement down to the present

time when he became a virtual prisoner in the hands of his reactionary followers. The non-co-operation movement was an acid test which, as soon as it was launched at once separated the false leader from the true one. The Non-co-operation demanded supreme sacrifice on the part of those who wanted to serve the mother country; the movement further proved that nothing could there be, be it life, or property, which is more valuable to a man than the emancipation of his country. How many of those who posed as leaders of the country, sneaked away from the perilous battle-field when the battle-drum was heard calling people from all quarters. Afraid of the coming battle some formed the liberal party, some gave up politics altogether and some went straight to the rank of the enemy, but the remnant of the nationalists of the pre-non-co-operation days, in search for a new career after leadership turned into a Communalist and found that the new job would suit their purposes in all possible ways. In this new rôle, no one will have to sacrifice a farthing, no one will have to face the frowned look of the Authorities and yet leadership will be thrust upon him. Who will deny to himself such prosperous and tempting position? And hence, there is no wonder that Mr. Jinnah will be made the undisputed leader of the new party when he deserted his old comrades and filled the rank of the Communalists?

The turning back of his face from the cause of Nationalism forms the blackest record in the career of Mr. Jinnah. To give up politics, or to join issue openly with the bureaucracy would have been a different thing—that would not have, at least, deluded, deceived or misled a large number of half conscious people. But

the position of a Communalist leader is a peculiar one. He will not decry nationalism, but will not do anything which will go a long way to weld the divergent and warring communities into one homogeneous nation. He will not personally support the anti-Indian policy of the Government, but will not hesitate to take into confidence all those miscreants and hired supporters of the bureaucracy whose profession it is to betray the cause of the country on every occasion whenever the well-being of the country is placed in their hands. He will discuss constitutional points with them and will push forward their ideals as opposed to the ideals of the liberty-loving nation. The beginning of Mr. Jinnah's fall may be dated from the very day when the Non-co-operation method was adopted by the nation for the attainment of its goal. Mr. Jinnah condemned the movement without giving to the country or to his community any other alternative method of attaining their political ideals. As long as the movement was in progress he kept himself away from all public activities and if on any occasion he had to open his mouth he did it only to denounce a movement which gave to the somnolent of his country a very good shaking up. It was only when the Non-co-operation was withdrawn, when the standard of sacrifice was a little bit lowered down that Mr. Jinnah and many other men of his ilk came out from their secluded cave and became the ascendant lord of the moment. The time was very hard for India, Communalism became rampant throughout the country, and such paltry thing as music before mosque or the killing of a cow engrossed the whole attention of many people. Instead of discussing how easily freedom could be attained, how India

would be among the self-governing nations of the world, the attention of many leaders of both the communities was focussed on the question of seats and services. In the midst of this pitiable spectacle, there was a faint ray of hope in a handful of men who tried their level best to remind the people of the follies of the fanaticism they were indulging in. But when the venomous tongues of the demagogues are let lose in a frenzy of passion, who cares to listen to the counsels of wisdom? Many eyes were then turned towards Mr. Jinnah in the fullest hope that he would not desert the cause of the entire nation at the time of its greatest crisis.

It was when the Nehru Report was agitating the minds of the people that he framed his famous 14 Points—the most reactionary document that was ever produced by a slave nation when freedom's battle was waging in the country. Thus was kicked away by the famous constitutionalist the first specimen of a constitution merely on the ground that it did not give a few more seats to a particular community. It is impossible that the type of men who crowded round him would help him in any way in producing anything worth value. The communal solution of the Nehru Report was supplemented by 14 points indeed, but where was the constitution? It is evident that Mr. Jinnah will not object to the worst form of despotism if his followers are given a large share in it. Otherwise how could he dare proclaim large shares for his adherents without ascertaining what form of government were they going to have? Such is the anomalous position in which he is placed. The real fact is that in 14 points we find the hand of Esau but the voice is invariably the voice of Jacob.

After 14 points, Mr. Jinnah's fall was complete—a moderate of the moderates and a communalist of the communalists Mr. Jinnah totally lost his foresight and did not perceive the evil influence, the baneful effects, that his 14 points might exercise upon his community. The corroding ulcer that his fourteen points had created in the entire body politic of the Muslims of India will never be healed unless all those so-called privileges and advantages are abandoned for ever. For the Muslim political backwardness, their lack of virility, strength and manhood, their lassitude, langour and cowardice—for all these, Mr. Jinnah's 14 points are to a great extent responsible. The Muslims of India had lost a fair chance of receiving that inward strength, that life-giving and soul-nourishing stimulus which the two stages of civil-disobedience movement had brought back for the dead nation. What has Mr. Jinnah in his store to offer as an alternative for these to his community? Like the mountain in labour which after prolonged tumult and commotion produced a mouse, Mr. Jinnah's ceaseless endeavour gave to his followers the assurance of some more additional seats and services.

We expected many things from him in the R. T. C. At least we expected that he would not humiliate the honour of India like other communalists both Hindus and Muslims. But he fared no better than the rankest of the communalists. It is evident from the proceedings of the Round Table Conference that it was the communalists of both the communities, that shattered all prospects of the solution of the communal problem—we do not regret for it, because we knew that the communalists would never come to any term with anybody in

the world. But what we regret for is that a man like Mr. Jinnah who talked so big about Hindu-Muslim unity and about the future constitution of India, could not rise above pettiness and was rather easily entrapped by the avowed reactionaries ; and he was not ashamed to represent himself as their spokesman.

Another act of his treachery and short-sightedness, is his open support to the pernicious Minorities Pact—a pact which was made with the avowed object of perpetuating the foreign domination over India. As long as he was pushing forward his 14 points, he was simply a communalist, but now in advocating the cause of the Award, he became a traitor to the cause of his country. How could a patriot make common cause with Europeans and Anglo-Indians (whose attitude towards Indian aspiration is not unknown to him) against the Hindus who with all their faults are our own countrymen passes our comprehension. The results of his labour and the treachery of the party of which he is the ring-leader are enshrined in the Award and Mr. Jinnah might get the self-satisfaction that above all things his 14 points were incorporated in the Award. But he does not perceive that it was being done at a bitter cost—at the cost of liberty and substantial responsibility in the future constitution.

When the J. P. C. Report was published, it was expected that Mr. Jinnah will realise the utter futility of the mendicant policy of the moderates and will receive a moral shock at the humiliation of India at the hands of the diehard elements in England and will perhaps lead a country in wide agitation against the J. P. C. Report. But from where will he get that manhood, that

broad outlook, that vigilant attitude, that higher sense of honour and prestige which a true patriot feels when the slightest fling is made on his country? The last trace of it was effaced from his mind when he joined issue with the reactionary party. And hence the unfortunate years that elapsed between his 14 Points and his pompous entrance into the Assembly, furnish no record of glory and great achievements. Therefore we expected nothing from him when he entered the Assembly in the last November election. There is a Bengali phrase which says "even the price of a dead elephant is more than a lakh of rupees". But mentally decrepit and politically bankrupt as Mr. Jinnah is, he proved no better than the tamest of the moderates. He has become a willing toy in the hands of the reactionaries. He belied the expectation of those who wanted much more from him. Thus Mr. Jinnah lost many fair chances which properly utilised, would have been the cause of blessings to India, but his impolicy, his hesitating attitude, his do-little policy made confusion worse confounded.

The fact is that when the vital problem is the emancipation of the people from all bondages, there should always remain two parties and only two parties—the party which govern and the party which is governed. The existence of any other party is a perpetual hindrance for the achievement of the destined goal. The fatal blunder in Mr. Jinnah's whole life is his failure to identify himself with either of these two parties, and he joined that party which in every country proved to be an excrescence in its body-politic. He is now a lost child of the mother country and back number in progressive politics. Nobody knows when better sense will prevail

upon him and when he will no longer allow himself to be misled and duped by the reactionary communalists. But like the aggrieved father we always pray to God that the lost Joseph be returned to us. Amen!

A REJOINDER TO INDIAN MUSLIMS' MANIFESTO IN BRITISH PRESS

A few days ago when some prominent Hindus of Bengal issued a manifesto in which they complained that the Muslims in general took a negligible part in all national movement, there was a stir among the nationalist Muslims, some of whom immediately issued a counter-manifesto claiming that the Muslims' contribution to national movements was not an inconsiderable one. We never expected that there would be a single Muslim in India who would be so soulless and callous as to feel himself proud of the fact of his having done nothing for the freedom movement of the country. To our utter dismay, when we found that some "leading Muslims" including H. H. Aga Khan, far from giving the lie direct to the statement of the Hindus, came forward with a manifesto corroborating the allegation of the Hindus, we hang down our heads in shame and sorrow. No fulmination of the Hindus, not even the wildest declaration of the Mahasabbhites, could undermine the prestige and honour of Islam in India as the Muslim manifesto did. The "leading Muslims" by issuing that silly manifesto, sought to implore the help of the British Government and British public in England, simply on the ground that at a time of national crisis in India when the rule of Ordinance was the order of the day, they played false to the cause of the country. To ask reward for such unpatriotic action is unknown

and unprecedented in the history of the world. Far from making things more simple, the Muslim manifesto will make the matter worse. There will be found thousands of Muslims in the country who have wholly dissociated themselves from every word of that manifesto.

We do not believe that the "endorsement and constitutional ratification" of the "well-known Muslim claims," are in any way essential to the "peaceful security of the Muslims' position" in India. Seven crores of Muslims of India are not a negligible minority. And therefore, under no constitution, however, "unsafeguarded" they are, will the position of the Muslims be, in any way, insecure, unsafe and exposed to danger. We want the transfer of real and substantial power from our rulers to the representatives of the people of the country. We will never grudge if those representatives be Hindus, Muslims or Christians. Just as we do not believe that the Muslims are necessarily the enemies of the Hindus, so also we do not believe that the Hindus will necessarily be the enemies of the Muslims. If unqualified and full-fledged power be handed over to the Indians, the Indians will themselves settle all their differences. Starting from a false premise that one community is necessarily the enemy of the other and that such enmity is to be perpetuated till eternity, the "leading Muslims" betrayed a lamentable lack of their political insight so much so that they have never made any attempt to bridge the huge gulf which has separated the two communities from each other. Therefore, it is our considered opinion that the uncompromising demands of our leaders, if accepted in toto, can never solve the eternal problem of the country.

With regard to the "justice of the claims," it must be admitted in all fairness that if all the communities come forward with a similar irreducible demands, it will be impossible to solve the communal problem at all. When the acceptance in toto of all the claims of all the communities, is out of question every community must have to waive and minimise its claims. No one has authorised the "leading Muslims" to utter a word about Bengal. The Muslims of Bengal have decided finally that they will accept joint free election without any reservation of seats. The same solution may be accepted in the case of the Punjab where the Muslims being in majority, cannot reasonably demand a statutory majority.

The signatories to the manifesto have started their argument from a wrong notion that because a community is numerically stronger than the other, therefore that particular community should be given seats in proportion to their number. Nowhere in the world's history such horrid principle has been accepted. In accordance with that principle if seats in the legislatures are allocated to the different communities of the country, then the Council House will be turned into veritable zoo, where there will be chattering and grimaces, quarrels and dissensions, but no real work. The Council house is meant only for the ablest and fittest of persons, the question of minority and majority ought never to arise there—the only question that counts there is the question of competency and trust. Education, wealth, and intellectuality are not a matter of accident, rather, the majority of a people in a certain province is purely an accidental speciality. No community ought to get a seat on the

strength of population. In allocating seats to a particular community, its intellectuality and its quota of contribution to the national cause must have to be counted, otherwise who will jealously guard any encroachment of the ruler upon the liberties of the people? From the persual of the manifesto it is evident that the general welfare of the country is not in their mind. The whole trend of their manifesto goes to show that it is a bold bid for scramble of power. If India's destiny be handed over to these men, then we have to bid farewell to all hopes of peace, security and the better government of the realm.

The mischievous manifesto has cast a serious reflection on the character and patriotism of the entire Muslims of India, when it asserts that the Muslims have nothing to do with the political movement of the country. It is apparent that the "leading Muslims" did not care to gain a firsthand knowledge of the country, otherwise they would have found that very many prominent leaders of the Moslem community have identified themselves with the national cause of the country. Posterity will judge the action of these so-called Muslim leaders who shamefully betrayed the cause of the country into the hands of the aliens for their own sordid ends. Participation in the movement for upliftment of the country is not a crime, nor an offence against the Government, rather it is a sign of life, vivacity, courage and manhood. If it is proved that the Muslims have nothing to do with the political advancement of the country and that they have remained aloof from all that may further the cause of the country then the inevitable conclusion is that they are wholly incapable of shouldering the

responsibility of their own country free from foreign control. Not to speak of giving them the majority of seats, not a single seat should be given to them, because of their lack of political experience. A single seat, granted to such a community as has not gained any political experience through their own effort will mean a great loss to the cause of constitutional advancement in the country. That the "leaders" of the manifesto are the greatest enemies of India's freedom will be found from another mischievous proposition they tried to establish, when they said that they preferred a foreign rule to the "ubiquitous" supremacy of the Hindus. Their statement is expressed in such a sophistical and fallacious language that a careless reader will be so befuddled and so caught in their trap that he will be led to think that immediately a "Hindu raj" is going to be established in India and that the safest course for him would be to cling to the older order of things. No language will be too strong to condemn the mischievous utterances of these "leading Muslims of India." In a free and independent India, the whole outlook of life will be thoroughly changed—there will be no fear of the "ubiquitous" supremacy of the one community over the other. But if any alternative choice is to be made by any man in the country, no sane person will hesitate to declare his choice as did the late Maulana Mohammad Ali, who in his exuberance of love for India openly declared both at Karachi and Patna that he preferred Hindu Raj to any foreign raj. In the same way we should openly declare that under no circumstances will we prefer any foreign supremacy for a moment to the ubiquitous supremacy of only one community, be that

community the Hindu, the Sikh, the Parsi or the Christian. As we want India to be ruled by the Indians and that in the interest of India, we would rather have the preponderance of one community over the other community in the country than to have even the last vestige of the foreign supremacy in our common country.

There is no doubt about the fact that the signatories to the manifesto are all those unworthies who took great care to prove the inability of the Indians in the last R. T. C. The peculiar qualifications for which they demand special claims have added insult to injury. It is disgraceful that some educated Muslims instead of trying to show their spirit of self-sacrifice, their sincere patriotism, their disinterested love for the country and the cause of freedom and lastly their capacity and attainment (which they laugh away as merely accidental), have gone to the other extreme and claimed that because they lack ability, intelligence, that because they are unpatriotic and have contributed nothing to the political movement, therefore, they should be given greater preference in future. Why should they want greater preference? Because it is they who will try to suppress the political movement more drastically than the aliens. Could hypocrisy and shamefacedness go further? We call upon the young generation of the Muslims to openly dissociate themselves against these mischievous move of so-called "leaders" who have become a tool in the hands of an interested third party. Unless we unequivocally repudiate the leadership of these so-called "leaders" there will be no hope for the regeneration of the young Muslims.

THE COMMUNAL AWARD

That the Communal Award has not satisfied anybody in the country will be found from the chorous of condemnation that is hurled against it from every quarter by many responsible persons. The Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and other communities whose destinies have been affected by the so-called award, are raising hue and cry against it. Every community thinks that the award has affected their interests and therefore, they are opposing it, but it is a matter of extreme regret that very few people of the country are thinking about it purely from the national point of view—from the point of view of the country as a whole. The injudicious and arbitrary way of the allocation of seats is not the only thing to be condemned of the Award. For what does it matter to the country or the nation if some seats are pilfered from one community and given to the other. If there is truth in our expectation that in near future India is going to get the substance and not the shadow of independence, and that there will be a real transfer of power from the ruler to the representatives of the people, then we hope, there cannot be the faintest murmur either from the Hindus or from the Muslims, if one community outnumbers the other in the legislature. Hence the real issue that underlies the Award is not the question of the allocation of seats ; the real issue lies elsewhere.

The Award is a challenge to democracy, responsible Government and nationalism in India. When the Indian

National Congress was making a superhuman endeavour to weld India into one nation, and when that endeavour was nearing completion, the Premier has thrown into India an apple of discord, in the form of the Award, with the exultant hope that it will dash into pieces all hope and ideas of nationalism and unity.

After a careful perusal of the Award, no one will fail to detect some of the glaring defects and injustices that have been deliberately put into it. Of these we shall deal in future. But to-day we shall discuss one point viz. the Award is a great test for the Nationalist Muslims.

By conceding a few more seats to the Muslims, the Government had the ulterior motive of weaning away the Muslims of all groups and parties from the cause of nationalism and democracy. From the day when the Award was announced, there was indeed a sort of feigned disaffection among the Muslims, but the outward face is indeed the index of the mind. There is a conscious effort of hiding the inward glee which the Muslims have begun to feel at the Award. Their minimum and irreducible demands have been minimised and reduced and yet they are happy, but among the Indians there are stubborn irreconcilables.

That the Communalist Muslims would accept ungrudgingly, of course, with a mockshow of protest, whatever would come forward from the 'Sarkar Bahadur,' was a foregone conclusion. Even if the Premier had framed the Award on the basis of Lucknow Pact, they would have accepted it under a show of protest. Hence it is futile to expose to the public the utter hollowness and insincerity of the members of the "Anglo-Muslim

Conference," miscalled the "All-parties Muslim Conference." But what pains us most to learn is the lukewarm attitude of some of the Nationalist Muslims towards the Award. We wonder how some of the veteran Nationalist Muslims have advised the community to accept the Award as the next best alternative. We expect that if there is a grain of love for the country in the mind of the Nationalist Muslims (which their religion—Islam inculcates in them), then they ought to declare in no unmistakable a term that the so-called Award is unacceptable to them, not because it did not guarantee them statutory majority in Bengal and the Punjab, but because, the whole trend of the Award is being directed against the cause of nationalism and unity in India. Majority or no majority, the Nationalist Muslims would not accept any solution of communal problem of which the ultimate motive is to divide India into communities and communities.

The Award is a trap, an alluring snare to enmesh the Muslim community in its fatal fibre so that there be not a single dissentient voice among the Muslims against the sham reform that is going to be introduced in the country. It is a bait, a delusion to which the Aga-Khanites and Jinnites and the irreconcilable communalists have fallen an easy victim. It is feared that the influence of the Award is disturbing the mental equilibrium of some of the staunchest nationalist Muslims. Will the nationalist Muslims forget the general and higher interests of the country for the temptation of gaining a few more seats in the councils?

Time has come when it will not be proper to forget the lofty ideal for which the Nationalist Muslims are

fighting against terrible odds. The liberation of the country is their ultimate goal than which no sacrifice is greater. They are pledged to adult franchise and joint free electorate, and until that ideal is achieved they will never accept any settlement of communal problem. With the liberation of the country as the political ideal and joint free electorate as the ideal solution of communal problem, how can they imagine of accepting the Award, passes our comprehension. We admit that the Award has given some preference to the Muslims, but at what cost?—at the cost of liberty, nationalism and responsible Government. Will the nationalist Muslims be so foolish as to accept statutory majority at the cost of liberty? Will they now change side and join issue with the forces of re-action? It does not matter the Nationalist Muslims whether Hindus or the Muslims predominate in the Councils ; their aim is to have the full power transferred to the representatives of the people—be that people the Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs. Now the Award is an acid test of patriotism for the Nationalist Muslims ; and surely some will be enticed away from the sacred cause for which they stood so long. In their anxiety for accepting the Award perhaps there will be a breakdown of the Nationalist Muslim party, and the dissenters will be labelled as the enemy of Islam. But we should be bold and courageous at this critical moment. If there be truth in our ideals, then we shall be triumphant in the long run. We, therefore, call upon the Nationalist Muslims to muster strong, to remain stuck to their lofty ideals, and raise such an incessant agitation against the Award, so that the Premier may be compelled to annul it soon. It may be that the

Award has given some preference to the Muslims, but it does not help the Indians to weld into a homogeneous nation. If it tends to spread seeds of discontent among the Indians, if its ultimate motive is to check the increasing tide of Nationalism, to curb the spirit of the Indians (at which the award does really aim) then we will have nothing to do with the Award. We would rather lose all the seats in the open contest than in our anxiety to get statutory majority we will prove a stumbling-block to the cause of liberty and democracy. We would rather fight for an uncertain number of seats than accept the Award which aims at dividing India. Let the Nationalist Muslims be bold and courageous, stand together, organise popular opinion against the Award which is no Award, but an unmerited decision of a biased overlord thrust upon an unwilling and inarticulate people.

THE GENESIS OF THE COMMUNAL AWARD

One of the most melancholy features of the present-day politics is the heated and acrimonious discussion about the Communal Award. The whole country may be broadly divided into two camps—one party supports the Award and the other rejects it. We are not concerned here with the merits and demerits of the Award. We only wish to refute the erroneous and mischievous argument of those supporters who held the view that the Award has been thrust upon us because of our inability to solve the communal problem in the last Round Table Conference, where the representatives of the various communities were gathered together in great pomp and grandeur. But we refuse to accept the valient Round Tablers as our representatives and we boldly proclaim that had the true representatives been represented there, the communal problem would certainly have been solved long ago.

The most important thing to be dealt with in this connection, is what types of men were they, who went to London at the back of the Government? How far could their claim to represent the interests of the various communities be justified? If it be a fact that those worthy persons were the chosen representatives of the people, then we are ready to admit that their failure to solve any problem would have been a serious matter—their failure would have been then a dismal failure of

the entire nation. But this was not the fact,—it was the Government who took the initiative to invite some persons whom they trusted, to attend the Conference at London. The method adopted by the Government was the most unconstitutional and retrograde one. If the Government had the sincere intention of granting responsible Government to the people, they ought to have accepted the right and proper method of asking the nation to elect their representatives to confer with the Home Government about the future constitutional reform of India. The Government might or might not accept their recommendations, but such recommendations would have been the considered opinion of the elected representatives of the people. Because anything which comes from any people or group of people, other than such elected ones is null and void and 'ultra vires' to the entire nation.

Hence we boldly assert that those unelected so-called delegates who attended the Round Table Conference in the teeth of opposition from the nation, are not our representatives ;—rather, they are the henchmen of the bureaucracy who went there to fulfil the purpose of the bureaucracy. The readers might remember that in the second Round Table Conference when Mahatma Gandhi plaintively told the Government that there was an air of unreality in the whole atmosphere as none of the so-called delegates could speak on behalf of the entire nation. The late lamented Maulana Mahommed Ali in his memorable address in the first Round Table Conference told unhesitatingly that the strange body of persons represented nobody, but themselves as nobody had elected them. The poor plea that the late Sir Shafi

took in defence of the position of the so-called delegates, that as they belonged to the various communities, they represented their interests too, could not satisfy the country at all. Because, it is a fundamental principle of democracy that persons elected by the people are always different from those nominated by the Government, even when the choice of the Government happens to fall on the same person whom the people would have elected. Such persons when nominated would do in a way as if a new man had appeared in the field. And there is reason to believe that Mr. Jinnah or Sir Sapru would certainly have been different men had they been elected by the people.

Thus the assertion that the Round Table Conference delegates represented the various interests of the country falls to the ground as none of them were elected by the people and no chance was given to the people to choose their trusted representatives. No representation is valid unless it is backed by election. The other party might say that the choice of the Government was sound, in that the people could elect no other persons than those nominated by the Government. If that be the case then why did not the Government observe the fundamental canons of democracy and ask the people to choose their own men? In that case the Government would not have violated the principles of democracy and still would have got the same persons who were desirables to them. But the Government knew the fundamental difference between election and nomination ;—they knew that elected Jinnah or Sapru would have worked or spoken in a different way from what was desired of them and more-

over they did not favour the principle of election in such matters for other reasons.

Thus we see that the first principle of democracy was flagrantly violated when the first R. T. C. was convened. The persons thus nominated are called delegates by courtesy but are no delegates from the truly democratic points of view. The so-called delegates were fettered by many considerations, and when their nomination to the subsequent stages of the R. T. C. depended absolutely on the good behaviour that they would do in dealing with matters which concern the interests of India and England, it was evident that they would rather lean towards the latter than the former,—specially when they were not accountable in any way to the people whom they pretended to represent, for any of their actions.

The Indians, comprising the various communities and interests do most emphatically refuse to accept the members of the R. T. C. as their delegates or representatives—members over whose selection they had no hand—and hence such persons were not entitled or authorised to say anything on behalf of the nation. The entire responsibility of whatever they did or spoke in the R. T. C. lies with them. The whole nation is not to be blamed for their failure, nor are they bound to accept their recommendation or acquiescence in any matter. Therefore it is wrong and unconstitutional to say that the Indians failed to solve any problem, communal or constitutional. We still believe that if the democratic principles in the selection of delegates were accepted, the delegates thus elected would certainly have arrived at an agreement.

But such chance was not given to the nation. Perhaps the voices of opposition would have been silenced if the nomination of delegates was based on any sound principle of equity and justice. But the nomination was as bad as it could be. In the muster-roll of names we found many people who were, it was claimed, associated with many public organisations and hence were public men, but there was the singular exception of the Nationalist Moslems and there is reason to infer that such exception was intentional. In that list we found many names who were unknown to the people, but at once leaped into prominence on one fine morning and had it not been for the R. T. C. that would never have come forward before the public from their hallowed obscurity. There was no cementing bond of union and cohesion among the delegates, one was opposed to the other. As no one knew who would be favoured with an invitation card to this feast of Penticost, there was no programme of action, no previously settled plan which was to be pressed forward and no mandate from the nation. It was a Noah's arc where every element was gathered together in a confused heap, otherwise the deluge of Civil Disobedience movement would submerge the whole Indian Empire. The whole thing from the top to the bottom was a solemn farce. When such persons are assembled in any place in the world, there will be only grimaces and chatterings and nothing else. Hence there is no wonder that the R. T. C. when so constituted would produce nothing but empty words and random talks. It became a veritable rendezvous where every prospect was marred and vitiated by men who were

drawn from undesirable quarters and who were in their nature irreconcilable.

When individually considered the delegates were great men and great scholars, but collectively they were utterly incompetent to deal with anything where the tug-of-war was between the Government and the people. Save with the exception of half a dozen of men the delegates almost to a man were concerned with their own personal interests and to none of them did the idea ever occur that their misbehaviour would perpetuate the slavery of their country. And practically they behaved in a manner that puts to shame the treachery of Mirjafar and Umichand. It was a great blunder on their part to try to settle the Communal problem before settling the constitutional problem. When the Minorities Sub-Committee was formed, they should have told the Premier plainly that they went there only to know the extent of power and responsibility that he was prepared to give to India to enable the people to manage their own affairs and it was not for the solution of the communal problem that they had crossed over the seven seas and gone over to London. But they were easily caught in the trap that was laid for them. And hence the Minorities Sub-Committee was formed with the rankest communalists as its members.

There was then enacted a scene which was a shame and disgrace to any self-respecting nation that aspires to win freedom. We do not know how far it was a fact, but the behaviour of some of the delegates leads us to believe that they acted in pursuance of a pre-arranged plan to unsettle all attempts at any solution of Communal problem among themselves. Otherwise, how could one

justify their action in the various stages of the conference. It was folly on the part of the Muslim delegates to place their claims above the claims of the country, and it was folly on the part of the Hindus not to concede some unsubstantial seats to the Muslims and arrive at a settlement. We are prepared to accept that both Mr. Jinnah and Dr. Monje were sincere lovers of their communities, but we are not prepared to accept that they acted wisely and prudently like true statesmen in the R. T. C. when dealing with the communal problem. It was expected that the presence of Mahatma Gandhi would make matter easier, but it made confusion worse confounded. Taking advantage of his sincerity and his readiness to accept any agreed formula, the ribald communalists of both the communities upset all prospects of the solution of the Communal problem. The Mahatma had plainly told the Muslim Communalists that he would accept their demands if they would press forward the national demands. But they refused to do that and insisted on their demands being accepted unconditionally by the Mahatma. This the Mahatma did not do—thus arose the Communal tangle.

It was at this fatal hour of national humiliation that signed the scandalous Minorities Pact. And what is the Minorities Pact? It was a solemn agreement of some of the present leaders of the Moslems and the depressed class with the Europeans and Anglo-Indians to allow the latter to rob India in as many ways as they liked on the condition that they would willingly give some seats to the former. And through what process of reasoning the Muslim leaders had consented to make an agreement with the avowed enemies of India? It was this:—"It

was whispered in their ears, that the Hindus are the common enemies of both the Muslims and the Europeans—enemies of the Muslims because they are not accepting their 14 Points and enemies of the Europeans because they are carrying on political agitation against their domination in India, because they are ruining their trade in India by their policy of boycott and bringing havoc in Manchester and Lancashire. And therefore let us make common cause against the Hindus,—we will give you 14 points and you will allow us our special privileges which we were enjoying so long without any let or hindrance''. Hence were drawn the Muslims towards the Europeans to form a league against the Hindus. And thus was avenged the Congress and the Mahatma who sternly refused to give any special privilege to the enemies of India. This is the genesis of the Minorities Pact. The Muslim delegates were either a signatory to this nefarious Pact or a tacit supporters of the principles under which the Pact was agreed upon. Their moral failing was not shocked in allowing the Europeans to rob India in the easiest manner possible.

Thus was gone the political ideal of the Muslims, thus were thrown to the winds the interests of the toiling Moslem masses and things that became uppermost are the chances of getting more seats in the Legislatures. The unseen and the mysterious hands that were directing the destinies of India at the R. T. C. were at last satisfied that their attempts were not in vain—it was to create this hubbub, this confusion that the R. T. C. was convened in England. And everything that the other party had expected, did happen, but nothing that the Indians not excepting the Muslims,

were expecting was attained. And to satisfy the party that did its most to humiliate India to prove India's inability, to checkmate the attempts of Gandhiji and to fetter India to the feet of foreigners, the Communal Award was announced. The Award is the offshoot of the Minorities Pact and the Minorities Pact is the product of treason and infidelity, a hybrid offspring of treachery and faithlessness.

Thus after a great deal of comotion, and tumult, moving heaven and earth, a rat was produced in the shape of the Award. It is impossible that the product of doubt and misgiving could satisfy anybody in the world—any individual who has the least grain of love for his country. Award was so formed, only to vivisect India into numberless parts so that foreign domination over India would be perpetual. The Round Table Conference did not give freedom or responsible government to India but gave the Award—a thing which will make freedom impossible, which will make any united action impossible, which will cut at the very root of democracy and all democratic principles and will shatter to pieces any prospect of Hindu-Muslim unity and any prospect of regenerating the Muslims from the torpor of age-long superstition and slavery—intellectual, moral and political, for many generations to come.

MUSLIMS AFTER THE AWARD

In spite of all possible oppositions from the nationalist elements in the country, the so-called Award as declared by the British Premier, has remained untouched and it has got such a permanent shape under the statutory protection of India Act, that a pious resolution in any Indian legislature is powerless to delete or add a word to it. Hence if the safeguards as enunciated in the Award be deemed to be the eternal blessings of the British Government, then the Muslims must have just reason to be thankful to the Government and they may rest assured that no tactics of the Hindu-Mahasabha would be able to deprive them of the permanent fruits of the Award.

We have been given almost all the safeguards and protections that we have been demanding from the past two decades—we have got a statutory majority in four important provinces, a perceptible and satisfactory weightage in other provinces where we are a majority—one-third of seats has been permanently fixed for us in the centre and as regards services, we may have as many posts as we can afford to get. Thus, Islam, which but for these valuable safeguards and securities, were in danger of total annihilation, has been saved by the timely help and protection of the British Government. We shall only wait and see how the Muslims with the Award as their shield might make progress through a thorny path and avoid with ease and comfort all the incon-

veniences which are the ever-recurring phenomena of foreign domination.

From the time of the establishment of the British rule in India down to the present day, the services under the Government have become almost the monopoly of the Hindus, and the Hindus are predominating in every legislature. But have these incidents affected the destinies of the country in any appreciable way? Has the chronic poverty of the country which was once fabulously rich, been removed? Education, sanitation, agriculture, business—have these things improved in any appreciable degree? Are not the Hindus labouring under the same economic depression, the same political subjection, as the millions of the vast Muslim masses are doing? The unemployment problem is as keen among the Muslims as it is among the Hindus. In spite of their gaining monopoly in the services,—people are day by day degenerated—business is becoming duller, agriculture is becoming less profitable—in a word the whole country, by its misery, poverty, want, disease, pestilence and all sorts of preventible evils has been presenting a grim spectacle of ruin and destruction. Being better represented in the legislature and monopolising all the services under the Government, have the Hindus been able to solve the vital problem even of their own community? Services under the Government they have enjoyed to their surfeit, eloquence they have wasted to its fullest extent in the different legislatures of the country, but, we ask, have they been able to do anything which is of tangible benefit to the country? The answer to such questions is an emphatic 'No'.

What essential things were there wanting in the Hindus that they, in spite of monopolising the services and seats in the legislatures—the ‘summum bonum’ of the earthly existence of the present day Muslims of India,—could not remove the age-long miseries of the people and could not bring peace and prosperity to the unhappy motherland? If seats and services were the be-all and end-all of the existence of a nation on earth, then the Hindus could have worked miracle in the country, they could have shown to the world, that with all the evil effects of slavery, only through these means, a nation might rise to the pinnacle of glory. But the experience of a few generation has thoroughly disillusioned those who cherish such ideas. Hence there arose the necessity of uprooting the root cause of all the evils which cannot be done without gaining freedom of action in all the administrative affairs. Because a good government is under no circumstances a fit substitute for self-government.

The plain fact is this that without freedom, without the fullest liberty and power to do what a nation might think best for its uplift, some favourable concessions in the shape of lucrative posts and honourable seats in the legislatures, cannot do any lasting and tangible good for the down-trodden country. The highly paid officials under a foreign government are nothing but the instruments of oppression and the depraved and shadowy legislatures of a dependent country always perpetuate the slavery of that country. Is it possible that a suzerain authority while retaining all its power in its hands can divest even a shadow of it to the people of the dependent country whose well-being is at variance with the former?

The legislative bodies of such countries might have had the outward show of an independent parliament with its Speakers, Ministers, Cabinets and all the paraphernalia of parliamentary grandeur. But in the exertion of power and influence these worthless bodies are quite analogous to the debating clubs of a well-managed institution.

Hence in spite of the existence of some gaudy legislative bodies a dependent country cannot make any headway towards the regeneration of its people. As most of the posts under the Government are held by the natives of the country it may have the resemblance of a national government, the rulers are always clever to keep the mainspring of power in their hand. Hence the highly salaried native officials cannot do anything of their own accord—what they do, they do at the beck and call of their masters. Under the circumstances what can be expected from such men? After several years of bitter experiment covering over a period of near about fifteen years, the Diarchy has proved beyond a shadow of doubt that without the vestige of substantial power in the legislatures nothing can be done by the Government. Experience has given its verdict and it is this that power, and more power and nothing but power—that is the thing that can give a true life to a legislature, otherwise the sham and mockery of reform shall not regenerate India.

Most of the Indian delegates in the R. T. C. did not or could not realise the true nature of the grievances that a subject nation might have had against the foreign domination. They thought that an equitable distribution of seats and services would be the permanent solution of all the evils they were labouring under an alien rule. And so they devoted most of their times and energies

to the settlement of that problem only. But when it could not be solved by mutual agreement, the British Government themselves of their own accord gave their own verdict over the matter, which now goes by the name of Communal Award. It is a mistake to think that the Award has satisfied nobody in the country—it has satisfied a group of men in whose eyes, seats and services are the most covetable things in the world. Up till now the Hindus were monopolising these things, from hence a fresh batch of people may monopolise them. It has been found that in the past, the Hindus in spite of these unsubstantial things could not do any tangible and permanent good to the country—very soon it will be found the lucky gainers under the Award will meet the same fate, because as nothing has been given to them in the India Act, in spite of the Award they will not be able to advance the cause of their community even one step further towards a destined goal.

India Act has been so framed, so little power has been given in it for the people and the major part of the Act has been so much vitiated by the instruction of checks and balances that any smooth working of it would be impossible. Muslims and non-Muslims, Europeans and Anglo-Indians and some vested interests would constantly fall one each other's throat, and quarrels and dissensions would be a constant feature under it. What miraculous results do the Muslims expect out of this chaotic atmosphere? Rather the India Act with the Award as one of its unchanging incidents, will perpetuate India's slavery and the Muslims will not escape from its degenerating influence. Soon after the enforcement of the Act the Muslims will find that they have been most

wronged by their adopted friends. We shall not disclose here the worthlessness of the Act, but this much is certain that the Muslims, although they have been given fair and adequate representations in it will share the same fate together with the others. Special privileges will not protect them from the dangers that will follow as necessary consequences of the India Act. Ministers they will have in large numbers and perhaps in most of the provincial legislatures they will take a leading part in forming the Cabinet, but they will have to stop there and no further step can be made as long as the Act remained unamended. Thus in spite of the Award the Muslims will not be able to reap any harvest out of it.

Hence we do not entertain any sanguine hope about the Award. Rather we are afraid that it will have a sort of degenerating effect on the entire community,—it will curb their national spirit and will keep them away from all political activities. Rank communalism will be their sole guiding spirit. Enamoured of the so-called safeguards under the Award, the Muslim mentality will be vitiated by a sort of irremediable inferiority complex—the Muslims will dig their own graves. Therefore the thing of prime importance is to take step so that the wretched India Act may be modified in such a way that substantial power may be vested in it. It would be folly on their part to rely on such an insignificant thing as the Award and build a 'house beautiful' on a quick sand and thus hasten their own ruin.

“WHO SUPPRESSED THE MUSLIMS ?”

It has become almost fashionable with some of our Muslim leaders to hold either the Hindus or the British Government responsible for our present day backwardness, illiteracy, poverty and various other disabilities we are labouring under. They are of opinion that the Britishers and the Hindus have all along been conspiring to suppress the Muslim community. I do not wish to exonerate the Hindus or the alien Government of the charge of suppressing the Muslims, if they are really responsible for it. But it will not do, nor will it pay us anything if we lay all the blame at others' door, which we totally forget or ignore the inability of our leaders to improve the community. If the Hindus or Government are responsible for suppressing us in one way, our leaders are responsible for it in thousand other ways, and to be impartial we must have to admit that the Muslims themselves are mainly responsible for their present-day degeneration and degradation.

It is very unfortunate that when strong action is necessary to rouse the community from its lethargic condition, the leaders, in order to be relieved of their duty, are throwing mud and stones at others, as if that will help the Muslims to improve their condition. But history will tell a different tale. It is the incapacity and lack of far-sightedness of our early Muslim thinkers to grasp the whole situation of the country when India passed from the hands of one ruler to the other, that is

mainly responsible for all the ills and miseries to which the entire community has been subjected. Their fanaticism, their mistaken notion of religion, their narrow-mindedness and their unqualified hatred of everything western, kept them aloof from all touch with the modern world and cooped them up within the four walls of “Shariat” and mediaevalism. Their horror of western ideas and ideals which were in many respects far advanced than their mistaken notion of religion, prevented them from gaining access to western knowledge, which fact is really at the bottom of our present-day degradation. The Hindus would have shared the same fate but for the untiring efforts of David Hare of sacred memory, and some prominent Hindus, such as Rajah Ram Mohan, Vidyasagar.

That no one is responsible for our present-day degradation than our leaders, is to be found in the attitude of our present leaders towards various problems, social, religious and political. The same spirit pervaded everywhere formerly. How could a community prosper and make advance whose accredited leaders still in this 20th century believe that the abolition of Purdah (seclusion), and the imparting of higher education to women, will jeopardise and destroy Islam? What more could be expected from men of 18th or 19th century when the great leaders and legislators of our community of this enlightened age, think that the passing of Sarda Act, the granting of franchise to women, are against the teachings of Islam? They foolishly drag down the name of Islam in each of our secular reforms. As long as there will remain defect in our very conception of Islam and there will linger mediaevalism in our mental

outlook, there is no hope for the regeneration of our community. No amount of safeguards and reservation of seats will save the community !

At a time when the Hindu girls are gradually coming out of Purdah, gradually passing examination after examination, and taking active part in all public affairs, our beloved leaders like the Church of Middle Ages are preaching about the blessings of ignorance, and are sermonising on the usefulness of Purdah (seclusion). The conservative people are getting greater impetus to their stereo-typed mentality. Neither in the past, nor even to-day was there held a higher ideal before our Muslim youth by any great man. With the exception of Sir Syed Ahmad we do not find a single leader like Rammohan, Vidyasagar and Vivekananda, who did or could do something for the whole community. But still we should blame others for our backwardness. To few great men in this world opportunity was given ; it is the business of genius to create an opportunity and rise higher and higher. Combination of circumstances and opportunities makes any man great, but true greatness is always independent of circumstances. The Hindus and the Muslims were equally subjected to the domination of a foreign rule, but how is it that the Hindus could neutralise the evil effect of a foreign rule and the Muslims could not? The reason is to be found elsewhere. It is neither the "duplicity" of the Government, nor the "intrigues" of the Hindus, it is the indifference and narrow-mindedness of our leaders that made the entire community effete and degenerate. Signs of decay and ruin are to be found everywhere. What we need to-day for our regeneration is not the 14 Points of Mr. Jinnah,

but a real awakening and an urge from within, without which the whole community will remain “suppressed” as it is to-day.

IS ISLAM IN DANGER ?

There is a section of our co-religionists who are so pessimistic about the future of Islam and the Muslims in India that they always like to paint a blackened picture of an age in which the "virile and martial Muslims" will be turned into a puppet show ; "a governing race" will be put eternally under the subjection of the Hindus. They always apprehend that at every movement of the Hindus, the security of the Muslims is at stake and that the Muslims are so weak and docile that very soon some impending danger, cataclysmic in nature, will befall the Muslims and will engulf the whole community into an abyss of eternal doom. It is only the Britishers, they would have us believe, who have kept Islam out of harm's way, and therefore, they say, as soon as the hands of the Britishers will be removed from India, a general massacre like that of "St. Bartholomew" or an establishment of a bloody tribunal like that of the "Holy Inquisition" will crush Islam root and branch from India.

This is the mentality of some of our Muslim friends, who are termed as "leaders" of the community. Never have we come across a more notorious instance of self-deception than this—"Islam in danger !" what a cowardly mentality ! What a fickle faith in Islam ! What a mean conception of one's own capacity, what a miserable lack of self-confidence ! If after 700 years of residence in India with pomp and pride, glory and magnificence, a community do not dare to stand on its own legs, can-

not create that inward faculty, that self-animating, life-giving power and energy which is essentially necessary to regenerate a nation, then that community is doomed to annihilation beyond any prospect of revival within near future. It is pathetically amusing to assure the Muslims that Islam is not in danger, nor is there the least apprehension of any such danger. What indications have they found which are so dangerous to the Muslims that they are always trembling? If the instances of some communal riots (whose genesis is always shrouded in mystery) in which the casualties of the Muslims are a little higher than those of the Hindus and the instances of public services where the Hindus outnumber the Muslims, are cited as proof positive of how Islam is in danger, then we must have to admit that these leaders have made a mountain out of a molehill, they have not the least idea of what danger is, and by rousing false fears in the minds of their followers have deceived the Muslims.

It is impossible to believe that men like H. H. the Aga Khan, Mr. Jinnah, Sir Shafat Ahmad who are supposed to be the leaders of a section of the community do cherish in their heart of hearts the faintest apprehension that the security of the Muslims will be endangered if their 14 points are not accepted. The real fact is that these leaders have long understood that, in near future, when the Government will yield some power to the representatives of the Indians, the regenerated young Muslims will never tolerate their past deeds and misdeeds and thus their monopoly of leadership would be destroyed for ever. It was therefore felt necessary to find out some device so that their selfishness may pass for pure

altruism. It is very easy to rouse the religious instinct of the Muslims by one fine catch-word "Islam-in-danger"! The slogan was at once taken up by the fanatically-minded people with whose help our "beloved leaders" drew up a lot of minimum irreducible demands and declared that unless those are granted in toto, "Islam will never be out of danger." And what are those demands? Nothing new, nothing ingenuous, nothing like the three-year plan of Ghazi Kamal Pasha, nothing like those measures and devices adopted by Peter the Great of Russia, or Frederick of Prussia to infuse life into dead people. A few posts under the Government and a few more seats in the Council are all that they are hankering after in the name of the entire community. A very fine example indeed of how a mountain in labour produced a rat. What we laugh at and wink at is not the making of excessive demands but at the tremendous disproportion between the danger and the remedy.

Supposing for one moment that Islam is really in danger, may we ask these leaders, will the remedies suggested in their demands ensure the Muslims a secure place "under the sun"? Will they remove the proverbial, chronic poverty of Indian Muslims? Will they stop that huge drainage which is sucking the life-blood of the whole nation, Muslims not excepted? Will they impart the best type of education, and facilitate a better system of sanitation? Will they save the Muslims from terrible havoc caused by famine, flood and cyclone? If some seats and posts are all that can save a community, then the condition of the Hindu masses would long have been improved, then their poverty, illiteracy etc. would long

have been a thing of the past. If it is true that Islam is in danger then it is certain the demands of the Muslim Conference will not save Islam, there are other methods and other ways which are more beneficial to the Muslims than the 14 Points of Mr. Jinnah. Whatever measure is adopted to ameliorate the condition of the Muslims, one thing is certain that unless an inner urge comes from within the Muslims, no outside help and artificial prop can save the community from impending danger, if there is any. We do not know how long will the community by the advice of the leaders continue to depend upon others but this we must predict that as long as this mean mentality of "dependence", will obtain in the community, as long as the opium of safeguard will be operative upon them, so long the Muslims will have no chance of progress. By constant plots, and other intrigues and sinister means, there may be found out a right royal road to services and Council houses, but there is no royal road to real advancement, progress and prosperity. Self-confidence and self-culture are the first thing and the last thing which we want to instill into the hearts of the younger generation of Muslims. Let their mind be disillusioned of all false fears whose existence is nowhere in the world except in the minds of cowards. Let courage and hope be thrilled into the minds of those who are trembling with fears. It is time that the Muslims are roused from their age-long slumber and become the worthy citizens of the country, fighting and dying for the country. The recent examples of Sultan Ibn-i-Saud, Reza Shah Pahlavi, Ghazi Kamal Pasha, and Nadir Khan clearly demonstrate that nothing but pure and unalloyed "PATRIOTISM" will ultimately save Islam

from danger and decay. So the young Muslims should imbibe the idea of "PATRIOTISM". Let the slogan of the younger generation of Muslims be "Hubbal Watan Minal Iman" i.e. "Love of country is an article of faith with the Muslims."
